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THE LIFE

OF

JONATHAN SWIFT

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THE LIFE

OF

JONATHAN SWIFT

DEAN OF ST. PATRICK'S, DUBLIN

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By HENRY CRAIK, M.A.

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TO

EDMUND LAW LUSHINGTON,

M.A., LL.D., ETC.,

LATE PROFESSOR OF GREEK IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW,

I Dedicate this Book;

NOT AS AN OFFERING WORTHY OF HIS ACCEPTANCE,

BUT THAT I MAY PLACE ON RECORD

MY GRATITUDE

FOR HIS TEACHING, HIS INFLUENCE, AND HIS EXAMPLE

PREFACE

THREE works bearing on the biography of Swift, appeared within the decade that followed his death. The first of these was the *Remarks* of Lord Orrery, who had known Swift only in his later years, and whose book consists chiefly of stilted literary criticism supplemented by scattered biographical details. The *Remarks* appeared in November, 1751: and so great was the interest in the subject, that Lord Orrery has noted in his own copy of the book, that within a month of its publication, 7,500 copies had been sold.* It was followed by the anonymous *Observations* of Dr. Delany in 1754: and by Deane Swift's *Essay* in 1755. Each of these works has its own value. Lord Orrery gives us a fairly vivid picture of Swift's manner in old age. Delany speaks with the advantage of greater judgment, and longer personal intimacy: but his defence of Swift is somewhat cold and timid, and runs upon narrow and conventional lines. Deane Swift, with all his eccentricity, yet gives us not a few personal reminiscences of interest, mixed with much that is absurd.

Hawkesworth's Life followed in 1755; but although more complete as a biography than any of those already noticed,

* MS. Note by Lord Orrery in a copy of the Remarks now in the possession of Lord Cork.

it did little more than sum up in narrative form, the current accounts of Swift. The first Life of Swift that took its place in literature was that of Johnson, published among the Lives of the Poets in 1778. But such new material as he possessed, Johnson had previously given to Hawkesworth: he did not afford either the time or the labour necessary to elucidate difficulties, or study character: and even the vigorous and trenchant criticism for which the Life is valuable, is marred by the inveterate grudge which, for whatever reason, Johnson bore to Swift.

In 1784, the younger Sheridan wrote his Life of Swift. As a boy, he had known Swift in decay: as a boy, also, he had received from his father, reminiscences of their long friendship. In spite of the preternatural dulness, for which Johnson's well-known phrase has made him celebrated, Sheridan always labours to be honest; and even his distant recollection of what his father had told him, could not fail to give some interest to his story. But his Life brings us no nearer to the real Swift: gives us little insight into his character: and scarcely attempts to enter into his moods, or to discern the motives that give a clue to much of the mystery that gathers round him.

Scott, whose Life first appeared in 1814, was the first to deal in a broad and generous spirit with the character of Swift. Rapid and cursory as the biography often is, Scott's genius did more for Swift than many a workman of greater care and elaboration could have achieved. He opened up for the first time the human interest that gathered about the story, so long the theme of petty and one-sided judgments, so long measured by the narrow rules of sects and parties that Swift abhorred. He made it plain that the defence of Swift was no forlorn hope

of paradox, but was possible to one whose view of human nature was the most genial, whose grasp of character was the most catholic.

But Scott had not time to do all that was required. He professed himself satisfied "to condense the information afforded by Mr. Sheridan, Lord Orrery, Dr. Delany, Deane Swift, Dr. Johnson, and others, into one distinct and comprehensible narrative." He has, indeed, done much more than this: but a book written on such a plan, could not, even in Scott's hands, supply all that was wanted in a biography of Swift. From the earlier biographers there had grown up a traditional formality of manner in apology, in defence, and even in eulogy, adopted by timid advocates, to suit a timid public. When, for instance, Dr. Delany asks us to admire Swift because he gained the First Fruits for the Irish Church: or because he suggested the building of fifty churches in London: or because he administered the revenues of his cathedral with economy, and paid much attention to the pronunciation of those who officiated there—we feel that, however estimable in their way, these are scarcely the acts that have contributed to keep alive a vivid interest in Swift, and that those with whom such pleas were likely to have much weight, were scarcely fit to judge of the wayward and often morbid genius of Swift. Yet Scott, perhaps unconsciously, perhaps from haste, has adopted much of this conventional manner in his biography. He claims admiration for Swift, "in spite of the antiquated and unpopular nature of his politics": "in spite of the misanthropical tone of some of his writings:" and, elsewhere, because of "his sincere and devout belief in the truths of Christianity." But before we begin to make allowances for Swift's politics, as antiquated and unpopular, we must be sure that we have found out the true

key to their adoption by one very considerably in advance of the current opinion of his own or of any other time. If we look upon his misanthropy as only an occasional blemish which mars his genius, and which we must endeavour either to forgive or to forget, the chances are that, in our apology, we may miss an essential trait in Swift's character, whose origin we should rather seek to explain, and whose influence in his work it is our business to trace. As to his acceptance of religious dogma, without denying or doubting its sincerity, may we not doubt whether we have described it rightly, in labelling it with the mark of conventional and respectable orthodoxy?

Scott has not thought it necessary to enter much more fully than previous biographers into questions like these. He has given us a clear, succinct, and graphic narrative: but on the difficult passages in Swift's life he has scarcely thrown fresh light. Of his new matter, some was derived from authorities scarcely deserving the regard which Scott was induced to give them.

In his History of St. Patrick's, published in 1820, Mr. Monck Mason devoted a long chapter to the life of Swift: but it consists chiefly of tedious controversy on a few doubtful points, and neither attempts to gauge his character from any broad point of view, nor has appreciably affected the current judgment on his life.

Scott's Life, while it revived the interest in Swift, produced at the same time a renewal of that adverse criticism which had never wanted its representatives. Jeffrey wrote a fierce diatribe in 1816, outdoing the usual narrowness of the clique to which he belonged, in the complacency with which he triumphs over the "cold, timid, and superficial genius" of the age of Swift, and Addison, and Pope: and in the bitterness with which he

attacks the honesty, the morals, and the humanity of Swift. All that was wayward and morbid in the genius of Swift: all that bore hardly on him in the record of his life: all the melancholy that overcast him, was dragged before the bar of an unsympathetic criticism, by one whose political creed taught him, as its first article, the absolute rectitude of all Swift's political opponents, the absolute turpitude of all his friends.

This view of Swift gained further prevalence by the help of a greater than Jeffrey. The genius of Macaulay cast a lurid gloom over the memory of Swift, even though it made the impression of Swift's power more vivid. Macaulay's picture has been a lasting one. The world has not lost sight of the tragic interest that gathers about Swift's life: but it has left unnoticed or forgotten how keenly sensitive was the heart buried under all that weight of misanthropy and cynicism; how much his pride was rooted in earnestness, his anger in hatred of oppression.

It was the object of the late Mr. Forster to apply a clearer light and a more sympathetic criticism to the intricacies of Swift's career. His unstinted enthusiasm may, at times, have impaired his judgment in regard to Swift, but even its exaggeration was no bad quality in a biographer. Death arrested his task; but not before Mr. Forster had accomplished enough to lay any fresh biographer under a heavy debt. Not only did he gather much new material, but he entered so minutely into the earlier part of Swift's career, as to leave but few points undiscussed,—we might even say, undecided.

In taking up the task, thus fallen from more competent hands, it was necessary to reconsider the plan of the book. Mr. Forster intended his Life to be in three volumes: and it is clear that if told throughout with the copiousness of annota-

tion and illustration to be found in the first volume, the story of Swift could not have been completed in less space. But whether so long a biography is either wanted, or necessary to make the picture clear and true, may well be doubted. It is impossible, in any consecutive narrative, to state, to discuss, to adopt, or to repudiate, each opposing view: or to refer in detail to the mass of miscellaneous trifles which have crowded about the name of Swift, and have been made to do duty in his biography. We are embarrassed with the mass of such material, and it becomes a first necessity, in order to bring the narrative within fair compass, and even to give to it clearness and consistency, to strip off much of the redundant matter, to lay aside much of the endless miscellaneous gossip, and to arrange, in their due proportions, the greater and the lesser actions of Swift's life.

The present biography is therefore confined to one volume: and where possible, the controversial matter has been relegated to Appendices, so as to prevent the interruption of the narrative by argument too much detailed. However doubtful we may continue to be as to some points, it is as much for the advantage of biography as of the State, that there should be some "end of litigation," and that we should, sooner or later, strike a balance between contending views, as fairly as we may.

In my task I have had the advantage of access to all the important material gathered by Mr. Forster, including what is now in South Kensington Museum, and the unpublished letters from Swift to Archdeacon Walls, belonging to Mr. Murray. The kindness of others has enabled me to add to this. In the first place, I have been entrusted by the Earl of Cork with the MSS. belonging to him, as left by Lord Orrery. These

include not only several unpublished letters from Swift to Lord Orrery during the later years of his life, but also the common-place books of Lord Orrery containing his own memoranda on Swift, and careful transcripts of several letters from Deane Swift relating to the closing years of the Dean. Mr. Frederick Locker has given me access to certain MSS. in his possession, which were in Scott's hands, but the importance of one of which, at least, he overlooked. From Major Stopford, I have obtained letters from Swift to Dr. Stopford: and through Mr. Elwin, I have obtained transcripts of some letters now at Longleat. The Sundon and Suffolk MSS. in the British Museum have thrown some light on Swift's later life, and have enabled me to correct some mistakes arising from errors in the printed copies. To Mr. Reynell I owe transcripts of certain letters from the Records at Armagh: and the Historical MSS. Commissioners have recently published some letters that help us to facts of Swift's life.

I have to thank others for assistance of a different kind: and, first and chiefly, Mr. Elwin, whose learning, great as it is, is not greater than the generosity with which he comes to the help of others working in the same field. Not only has he placed at my disposal results of his own research, but he has given me invaluable advice and aid in regard to some of the most serious difficulties of Swift's life. My thanks are also due to Dr. Ingram, Librarian of Trinity College, Dublin, and to others amongst the Fellows of that Society for assistance during my visits to their Library: to Dr. Norman Moore, for the help he has afforded me from a large knowledge at once of Irish affairs and of literature: to those in charge of the Forster and Dyce collection at South Kensington; and to the officials of the Royal Irish Academy, for assistance in consulting the rich

collection of pamphlets, on Irish affairs, there stored. In the attempt to realize as far as possible the actual surroundings of Swift, I have visited most of the localities connected with his name. In Dublin, I had the advantage of the wide local lore of the Reverend Mr. Carroll, of S. Bride's, to whom so many visitors to Dublin are indebted for a knowledge of its historic spots, and who has also supplied me with copies of some documents of interest. And at places so widely apart as Kilkenny, and Mullingar: Trim, Laracor, and St. Patrick's: Celbridge and Howth: Goodrich and Moor Park, I have had but one experience, that of ready and kindly help.

H. C.

LONDON, *October*. 1882.

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ERRATA.

Page 146, note †, *after* "1709" *to read*, "The Bishop of Cork was then ill of a spotted fever, of which he died: while Dr. South, whose benefice Swift most desired, did not die till 1716."

Page 320, line 16, *for* "comes" *read* "come."

LIFE OF JONATHAN SWIFT.

CHAPTER I.

SWIFT'S FAMILY AND EARLY LIFE.

1667—1692.

ÆTAT. *From birth to* 24.

New House Farm, Goodrich—The Swiftes at Rotherham—At Canterbury—The Reverend Thomas Swift—His sufferings in the Royalist cause—His sons in Ireland—Godwin Swift's success—Jonathan, the Elder—His marriage—Death—Birth of JONATHAN SWIFT—Childhood—At Kilkenny school—Stories of school life—The troubles of his early days—At Trinity College, Dublin—His bachelor's degree—The *specialis gratia*—Its real meaning—Three years of close reading—Death of his uncle Godwin—Help from other kinsmen—An unexpected visitor—The break-up of 1688—Swift in England—With his mother at Leicester—Character of Swift's mother—Life at Leicester—Goes to Sir William Temple at Moor Park—Swift's surroundings there—Character and position of Temple—Other inmates of the house—End of the first residence with Temple—Swift in Ireland—Returns to Temple—Obtains a master's degree at Oxford by Temple's help—His altered position in this second residence.

WITHIN a few minutes' walk of the pleasant village of Goodrich, near Ross, there stands a house, now the solitary memorial of a man not unnoticeable even for his own doings, but with a claim to more enduring fame in connection with the subject of this biography. Amongst all his ancestors and kinsfolk, it was the builder of this house, whose memory JONATHAN SWIFT regarded with the greatest veneration, and from whom he inherited not a few of his characteristic traits. It was to this house that Swift looked, even in his later years, as the home of his family: and in the doings of its builder he

found what attracted him most in all that family's annals. It was no ordinary dwelling.

"The architecture," to use the words of Swift himself, "denotes the builder to have been somewhat whimsical and singular, and very much towards a projector." * Fortunately we are yet able to confirm for ourselves the truth of the description. The house has now fallen into utter disrepair, but there is clearly something out of the common in the design. Separated from the village and the church by a small hill, it overlooks a quiet valley near the Wye. It is, as one who owned it a century and a half ago says, like three houses joining at one central point.† It is a big house, strong and stable: its mullioned windows open to the sun and to the wide-stretching country at every point of the compass: large and roomy enough to provide for its owner's ample family of "ten sons and three or four daughters," and yet with no useless space for halls or corridors or wide staircases. These last creep up in the corners like the winding steps in a turret. But odd as the house is, some of the rooms are handsome even in their fallen estate. Most of all it is remarkable for its enormous and burrowing cellars, reached from one room by a trap-door, large enough and strong enough to store away and protect not only fugitives and their provisions, but in case of need even cattle and other live stock as well. When the house was built, in 1636, as the date on its doorpost tells us, its owner could have had no idea of the uses to which these cellars were soon to be put: and it argued a strange lavishness of space and labour, or a strange craving after some safe retreat even from an imagined danger, that this patriarchal parson should have built his house on such a plan.

The builder of this strange dwelling was the Reverend Thomas Swift, Vicar of Goodrich, and grandfather of JONATHAN SWIFT, the Dean of St. Patrick's. The original seat

* Autobiographical Anecdotes. See Appendix I.

† Deane Swift, the younger, in his *Essay* on the Dean.

of the family was in Yorkshire, and Rotherham Church still contains a brass to the memory of Robert Swifte and his wife, who died there in the sixteenth century.* From this north-country stock there came two branches, both of which had eventually some connection with Ireland. One branch gained some notoriety by producing a certain Barnam Swifte, in whom the vein of eccentricity that appears in all the ramifications of the family, made itself oddly felt. His pursuit of that somewhat cumbrous form of wit and humour that pleased under James the First, gained for him the sobriquet of Cavaliero Swifte: and by Charles the First he was created, in 1627, an Irish Viscount under the title of Lord Carlingford. He left no son: but his daughters and co-heiresses were married, one to the Fielding who bore in society the name of "handsome Fielding," † and the other to Lord Eglinton.

The other branch, pursuing more humble and prosaic lives, passed from Yorkshire to Kent, and were established before the close of the sixteenth century at Canterbury.

One Thomas Swift, whom we may take to be the son of Robert Swifte of Rotherham, became preacher at St. Andrews, Canterbury, about 1570: and his son William Swift succeeded him, in 1592,‡ and married a Miss Philpot, an heiress and a

* The epitaph runs thus:—"Here under this Tombe are placyd and buried the bodyes of Robarte Swifte Esquire and Anne his fyrste wyfe, who lyvyde manye yeares in this towne of Rotherham in vertuus fame, grett wellthe and good woorship. They were pytyfulle to the poore and relevyd them lyberallye and to theyr ffrends no les faythfulle then Bountyfulle. Trulye they ffearyd God who Plentuuslye powryd his Blessings uppon them. The sayd Anne dyed in the moneth of June in the yere of o^r lord God 1539, in the 67 year of hur age and the sayd Robarte Deptyd y^e VIII day of August in the yere of o^r lorde God 1561 in the 84 yeare of his age on whose sowlles with all Chrystyn Sowlles Thomnipotent lorde have marcy Amen."

† This was the Fielding who not only squandered all that his first wife brought him, but to whom the Duchess of Cleveland afterwards trusted herself and her illgotten gains, to find the last frittered away, and herself so cruelly treated as to require the protection of the law.

‡ In the British Museum there is a funeral sermon preached by William Swift, in 1621, on "that painful and

shrew. He had one son: and with this son we come to the builder of the strange house at Goodrich, and to the first member of the Dean's family in whom peculiarities like his own were strongly marked, and whose memory was so cherished by him that it seems not a little to have affected his life and opinions.

This Thomas Swift, born in 1595, became a man of some mark amid stirring scenes. He was an only son: but unlike most only sons, was brought up under the severe discipline of a mother whose reputation as a termagant lived after her. Of her wealth he obtained but a small share, being disinherited, we are told, on account of some boyish peccadillo: and, left to his own resources, save for a small estate at Goodrich, he entered the Church, and early in the reign of Charles I, obtained the living of Goodrich, with which locality his memory is linked. He married a Miss Elizabeth Dryden,* of that Huntingdonshire family soon to be made famous by the poet to whose genius, for reasons that will be seen hereafter, his "cousin" Jonathan Swift was so obstinately blind, and whose faults and prodigalities alone he remembered.

During the early years of his incumbency, Thomas Swift was busied with the quiet performance of his duties, and with providing for the future of a rapidly growing family. He bought more land in his own parish, and in 1636, while the country was astir with discussions about ship-money, and

faithful servant of Jesus Christ, Mr. Thomas Wilson." The discourse has no special interest, except that, from its strong anti-Catholic views, we may suppose religious differences to have had something to do with sending this branch of the family from the ancestral home at Rotherham, where Robert Swifte had been buried as a devout Roman Catholic, only nine years before his son quitted that home for Canterbury.

* She was niece to Sir Erasmus Dryden, the poet's grandfather. From the Dryden family, the Swifts adopted not only Dryden as a Christian name, but also Jonathan—the name of the Dean's father and his own. The passing criticism from Dryden to Swift, then in the sensitivity of budding authorship—"Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet"—may well have laid the seeds of Swift's inveterate hostility to his kinsman's fame.

vague threatenings of struggles to come, he was building the house destined to stand many a siege.

In 1640 was born, being the seventh or eighth in the series of sons, Jonathan, the father of our author: and while he was still an infant in arms, the Rebellion broke out. In spite of his profession, the vicar of Goodrich was of too fervent a spirit to hold aloof from the struggle. It had scarcely opened before he became known amongst the Parliamentarian ranks for a delinquent. He had preached an ultra-royalist sermon in the neighbouring town of Ross: he was suspected of introducing arms on behalf of the Royalist cause into Monmouthshire: and he was known to be a man of mark in the district. He threw himself into the struggle heart and soul: and the combat was so hot about the banks of the Wye, that he soon felt the realities of civil war. The royal standard had been raised in Nottingham in August, 1642. In October of the same year, Thomas Swift's stout house and thriving homestead were visited by the Parliamentary marauders. Twelve times, so it was said, his flocks were driven off: fifty times his house was plundered from roof-tree to cellar. The Earl of Stamford commanded for the Parliament at Hereford, and, close by, the castle of Goodrich was held by the same party. The Marquis of Worcester held the castle of Raglan, but his presence proved no defence to the vicarage of Goodrich, or to the New House Farm, as the parson's own property was called. Again and again the house was stript. The supplications of his wife, in the Vicar's absence, were disregarded, and the bread and bed-clothes snatched by Lord Stamford's troopers from his children, who were preserved from starvation only by the hazardous mercy which neighbours dared to show.* The

* The account in the Dean's fragment of autobiography is taken from the "Mercurius Rusticus, or Country's Complaint," published in 1685. Scott has printed the passage (Vol. I. p. 504). In a transcript preserved in Lord Cork's papers, there are some notes, written, as I presume, by Mr. Deane Swift, of which the following have some interest. The captain Kirle, who attacked the vicar's house, was, it appears, a kinsman of Kirle or

wonder was that after all their hardships, anything was left to the Swift family: and the indomitable recuperative power of the Vicar earned for him the name of the "conjuror," amongst the simple country folk. He could catch and hurl back bullets, he had struggled with the foul fiend, he was proof against any natural or supernatural foe. But whether his recovery from plunder so often repeated was due to the Devil, or to his capacious cellars, he still held out: and even in 1645, when all was lost in the battle of Naseby, he carried to Lord Worcester at Raglan Castle, his waistcoat quilted with 300 broad pieces, as an offering to the King. His spirit never failed him throughout the struggle: his livings were sequestrated:* his farm was seized: he was reduced to utter poverty: but he still kept his loyalty as a servant of the Church militant in more senses than one. To him was ascribed the destruction of two hundred out of a troop of three hundred rebels, who, in crossing a stream, dashed themselves and their horses on the spikes of a hidden machine which the Vicar had previously contrived. Clearly the Committee of Hereford had some grounds for thinking that from their point of view this Vicar of Goodrich was a dangerous and scandalous delinquent, whose livings were not only to be sequestrated, but his person secured. He was imprisoned, but the close of the war brought him liberty. Once more, he set himself, to "repair his rafts" of private property: but he died two years before the Restoration might have brought him more ample redress.

This doughty vicar died in 1658, and was buried underneath

Kyrle, Pope's Man of Ross. The other note is one on the passage in which *Mercurius Rusticus* describes the cruelties inflicted on the vicar's children. "The Dean's father in particular," says the note, "was swung against the wall, and the violence of the blow laid him for dead upon the floor. He was then two years old; he was all his life subject to a giddiness, and so in like manner were the Dean and his sister. It was supposed the disorder was owing to this accident." This new origin for the Dean's malady is probably due only to Mr. Deane Swift's fertile imagination.

* Goodrich and Bristow. That of Goodrich was, in 1646, assigned to his brother-in-law, the Rev. Jonathan Dryden.

the altar of the church of which he had been vicar, and near which stood his battered house.* Of the broken and impoverished family, five sons went to seek their fortunes in Ireland. For the eldest, Godwin, at least, the indomitable Vicar had managed to secure a regular legal training: and he, after qualifying at Gray's Inn, came over to find in Ireland, then only slowly settling down after a series of convulsions, a field where legal knowledge was scarce, and yet much in demand.† The law courts were overwhelmed with pleas arising from the doubts in which repeated grants and revocations had involved all landed property. Godwin Swift's success was rapid. He lost no means of rising. His first wife was a kinswoman of the Marchioness of Ormond: and though even before the Restoration this wife was dead, the connection gained for her husband, already re-married, the office of Attorney-General of the Palatinate of Tipperary from the first Duke of Ormond. Of four wives, three brought him dowries: and one was drawn from a family so hostile to his traditional politics as that of Admiral Deane the regicide. His wealth increased, it is said, until at one time it reached as much as £3,000 a year.‡ Allowing a wide margin for the exaggeration of report, there yet remains enough, considering the value of money then and now, to prove that Godwin Swift was amongst the wealthiest citizens of Dublin, and one whose poor relations would find in poverty an added sting by contrast.

Other brothers§ followed him to Ireland: and amongst

* The only memorials of the family now in the church are the entries of the births of the vicar's sons and daughters, and the chalice once carried by the vicar for the administration of the Holy Communion to the sick, and afterwards presented by the Dean to the parish church. The Latin inscription runs thus: "THOMAS SWIFT HUJUS ECCLESIAE RECTOR, NOTUS IN HISTORIIS OB EA QUAE FECIT ET PASSUS EST PRO CAROLO PRIMO, EX HOC CALICE AEGROTANTIBUS PROPINAVIT. EUNM CALICEM JONATH: SWIFT S.T.D. DECAN. SANCTI PATRICII, DUBLIN. THOMAE EX FILIO NEPOS, HUIC ECCLESIÆ IN PERPETUUM DEDICAT. 1726."

† Deane Swift's Essay, p. 16.

‡ The authority is the apocryphal one of his grandson, Deane Swift.

§ The second son, Thomas Swift,

them that "seventh or eighth" son, Jonathan, whose career seems to have been as unlucky as the circumstances in which he first saw the light. He had come to Ireland, a lad of eighteen, on his father's death. He had lived on such casual employments about the courts as his brother's influence could get him. Before he had secured any sure income, and while he could settle on his wife no more than £20 a year, he did as penniless younger brothers will do, to the reasonable disgust of their more prudent and well-to-do elders, in marrying Abigail Erick, the dowerless daughter of an old Leicestershire house, claiming descent from that Eadric the Forester, who long defied the Norman rule. In 1665, Jonathan secured the appointment of Steward of the King's Inns, Dublin: and perhaps the prospect for the young couple, when prosperity was rapidly swelling the elder brother's store, seemed, for the moment, fair enough. But first a daughter, of whose lot we shall hear more, was born: and then, in the spring of 1667, while another child was expected, Jonathan Swift suddenly left his young wife a widow, to battle as best she might with the hardships that fall to a poor relation. Her time of early widowhood was occupied with petitioning the benchers to forgive her a debt of some twelve pounds due by her late husband, and to aid her in procuring arrears amounting to a hundred pounds,* due to her. She had full need of all that blitheness of heart which we know to have been hers, during these months that preceded the birth of her son, JONATHAN SWIFT, on the 30th of November, 1667.

Swift's birth took place at a house in Hoey's Court, a narrow and now squalid entry close by the Castle grounds, and within a few minutes' walk of the Cathedral of which he was afterwards

stayed in England, married Sir William Davenant's daughter, and was father of the Thomas Swift, afterwards Rector of Puttenham in Surrey, who brought on himself the sarcasm of his greater kinsman by laying claim to the authorship of the "Tale of a Tub."

* Scott has quoted these facts from Duhigg's "History of the King's Inns, Dublin."

Dean. The court is now dirty and mean-looking: but the situation was then one of the best in Dublin, and the houses, though conveniently close to the principal street, were approached only by sedan chairs, and thus relieved from the noise of the thoroughfare. The street close by (St. Werburg Street), was the busy street of Dublin, and had often seen, in the generation before Swift's birth, the mustering of trained bands, and the march of armed men. The houses in Hoey's Court, mean as they now are, yet retain some faint impression of their former fashion: and No. 7, in which Swift was born, which has been pulled down and the site enclosed in the Castle grounds, is still remembered by the older inhabitants as one of the largest in the court. In proportion to his reputed wealth, Godwin Swift may have ministered but grudgingly to his sister-in-law's wants; but she was not then living in any humble or poverty-stricken quarter of the town. His own house, like those of most of the wealthier lawyers, was close by in Chancery Lane or Bride Street. Swift's mother was not too poor to have had in her service a nurse, whose relations, at least, were English, and with whom is connected the first strange story of Swift's life. As the story is told us by Swift himself, this nurse became so attached to her charge, that having occasion to visit a dying relation at Whitehaven, she carried with her secretly the infant of a year old, and kept him with her for more than three years. The mother, pressed by poverty and ill at ease, may have been content, for a time, to relinquish her child to one who had cared for it so well. But however that may be, and unlikely as the story seems, no doubt has been thrown on it: and it was to this residence at Whitehaven that Swift's earliest recollections belonged. Faint enough they must have been, but they were cherished with an obstinacy that is characteristic of the man. We are told by one * who knew him in his later years, that he retained his affection for Whitehaven to the last, with a partiality which must

* MS. notes by Dr. Lyons to Hawkesworth's Life.

have fed itself on imagination more than on memory; even as late as 1739, when he was on the eve of that darkest passage that awaited him before death, he invited to dinner a merchant of Whitehaven, who with his son and daughter happened to pass through Dublin. Before he returned to Ireland he had learned to spell, and even to read any chapter of the Bible; and upon these early years in England he afterwards dwelt with pleasure, as serving, along with his English descent, to redeem him from what he considered the disgrace of having to own any Irish nationality.

Swift was brought back to Ireland in his fourth year: but was left with his mother only for a short time. Their chief dependence was on the charity of his uncle Godwin, and for that uncle Swift retained no very warm feeling. He was reckoned "a little too dextrous in the subtle parts of the law," says Swift, in the autobiography. Besides this, Godwin Swift was beginning to lose by foolish speculations the money he had gained by his successful practice. Whether inability or avarice was the cause, Swift seems to have found that the charity of his uncle was grudgingly bestowed: and once the thought had suggested itself to him, he was scarcely of a mood to suffer it to rest either forgotten or forgiven. At the age of six he was sent by his uncle to the grammar school of Kilkenny, then, as it is still, under the patronage of the Ormond family, and only a few miles from the family house of Swiftsheath. The teacher of the school, which held a high reputation at the time, was a Mr. Ryder: and under his charge Swift remained till the age of fourteen. Long after his death there was to be seen in the old schoolroom, now replaced by a more modern building, his name cut in the desk with his penknife.* Of the life of the schoolboy we know but little, and that little only from his own casual reminiscences. Here it was that the dog-Latin verses by which a knowledge of classical concords was acquired, suggested to him those jingling rhymes that in later

* MS. notes by Dr. Lyons on Hawkesworth's Life.

years he reproduced in his Latin-English escapades with Sheridan and Delany. Here, too, was the scene of a boyish prank, recalled by himself, in which he purchased for all he had in world, a "mangy" horse that was on its way to the knackers' yard, and rejoiced in the proud dignity of an owner until the poor brute presently fell dead at his feet.* Kilkenny itself, in the old cathedral of St. Canice, the remnants of the Black Abbey, and above all the great castle of the Ormonds, had much that must have vividly impressed the boy's mind. But the strangest thing about the town was the double corporation with separate jurisdiction. Divided by the stream which runs through the centre, the Roman Catholic and Protestant populations lived apart. The endless bickerings of the two have obtained a proverbial immortality in the fable of the Kilkenny cats: and in those bickerings, familiar to his boyhood, Swift was thus early inured to the baneful animosities that were eating into the life of the country. Of his schoolfellows we know something. Amongst them was his cousin Thomas Swift, the son of that uncle who had gained a quiet settlement in England as a clergyman before the death of the sturdy Vicar of Goodrich; a youth named Stratford, who passed to the city of London, and of whose commercial vicissitudes we hear something in Swift's later journals; † and above all William Congreve, whose genius he admired, in whose fame he took delight, and whose friendship he continued to enjoy, long after politics had done their best to separate the old schoolfellows. But a few casual glimpses are all we have of these years so critical for Swift's later career, while the young orphan, cut off from the mother who was the one bright influence in his life, was fretting out his heart, and doubtless magnifying his misfortunes, under the hated rule of an uncle

* Sheridan's Life, p. 402.

† See the Journal to Stella, passim. Swift at first rather envies Stratford's successes: but soon finds reason rather to pity him. He became bankrupt in the spring of 1712, nearly involving Swift's savings in his own ruin.

whom he knew to be grasping and worldly, and fancied, reasonably or not, to be grudging in his charity.

Swift was fourteen when he left Kilkenny school for Trinity College, where he was entered as a pensioner, along with that cousin just named, Thomas Swift of Oxfordshire. The memory of his uncle Godwin's charity, in connection with these college days, remained to Swift as an experience even more galling than that of the help given him in his boyhood. To the gloom that it bred in him he ascribed, writing more than forty years afterwards, the poor use that he then made of his time. "By the ill-treatment of his nearest relations," he says, "he was so discouraged and sunk in his spirits, that he too much neglected his academic studies, for some parts of which he had no great relish by nature; so that when the time came for taking his degree as Bachelor of Arts, although he lived with great regularity and due observance of the statutes, he was stopped of his degree for dulness and insufficiency; and at last hardly admitted, in a manner little to his credit, which is called in that College, *speciali gratiâ*." *

This gives us a picture, clear and simple enough, of the young student, anxious to make his way by regularity, industry, and effort, but cumbered by the gloom of his position, and still more by the burden of a genius that had not yet learnt to know, or to guide, itself. Had these words stood alone, no more need have been said; but his own reminiscences have been surrounded by a cloud of exaggeration.

In Swift's own words, it is plain, there is nothing either of extravagant self-depreciation, or of indignant censure of the system under which these student days were led. He neither slurs over the discredit, such as it was, nor makes it matter of undue regret. He explains it, as the result, partly of his own natural inclination, partly of the gloomy circumstances in which he was placed; but he is careful to accuse himself neither of arrogance nor of misconduct. That his reading was

* Autobiographical Anecdotes.

at this time desultory is only what we might have ourselves divined. Swift's was not a mind which would readily find contentment in the fixed studies of any ordained curriculum. The difficulties that occur in regard to his college career, however, arise from the glosses of later authorities. Delany, whose testimony is the best of all, tells us that Swift was wont to speak of himself in his college days as a "dunce," who believed "poetry, plays, and novels, to be the only polite accomplishments." This is clearly nothing but the colloquial version, with humorous exaggeration, of what the autobiography states with more reserve. But Lord Orrery adds some further detail of exaggeration to the account. Not only was Swift, according to him, rejected for insufficiency, and finally the recipient of a dishonourable degree; but he spent his time in ridicule of the college studies, and, when admitted to the same degree at Oxford, allowed the authorities there to rest in the belief that the *specialis gratia* was a mark, not of discredit, but of special honour. Deane Swift, who had been Lord Orrery's authority,* maintains that Swift's failure was due, not to carelessness or misdirected reading, but to positive stupidity; that he had worked, but worked without success. Sheridan adds to the story a mass of circumstantial embellishments. "Scholars," says Sheridan, "thought him a dunce;" but Swift, disgusted with the forms of the schools, persisted in arguing after his own manner, while the proctor sat by to put his arguments into scholastic form. Sheridan professes even to have been told by Swift the very questions dealt with, and the very arguments employed.†

The story gained in bulk at every stage. Samuel Richardson, in a published letter, started the novel idea that Swift

* The story of the misrepresentation at Oxford, thus depending solely on Deane Swift's evidence, and contradicted by the absence of the words *speciali gratiâ* from the *testimonium* granted by Trinity College to Swift, may safely be rejected.

† It is on this whimsical story that M. Taine has based the first touches in his consistently lurid picture of Swift.

was even expelled from the college on account of the licence of an attack which he made upon the authorities in the character of *terrae filius;* and Dr. Barrett, of Trinity College, in his Essay on Swift's Early Days, spent much labour in the fruitless effort to complete the identification of Swift with the offending satirist.

Setting aside this last story, as a baseless fancy, it is easy to see how the other exaggerations have arisen. It is not impossible that Swift may have spoken at times with much bitterness of his early failure, and that he may have repelled the attempt by Deane Swift, or anyone else, to find in that failure a symptom of dawning genius. Men whose consciousness of power requires no accidental confirmation, are not generally inclined to accept flattering explanations of their own youthful peculiarities. Swift may have met such attempts by asserting, even more positively than in the autobiography, that he was not idle, but unmistakably dull.* It is fortunate, however, that Mr. Forster's care has preserved for us a document which, taken with Swift's own words, brings us back to the plain facts of the case. This is the copy of a college roll of Easter Term, 1685, containing the results of the terminal examination which preceded the degree of February, $168\frac{6}{5}$, in which Swift's name appears. The subjects of examination are arranged in three heads,† and

* Mr. Forster, who seems to set aside the evidence of Lord Orrery and Deane Swift on this point, as well as in regard to Swift's representation to the Oxford authorities, has omitted to notice that there is better authority for the story than either. It is told also by Mrs. Pilkington who, worthless as she was, tells us much that is indubitably true about Swift. "When I heard the Dean relate this circumstance (that he had been stopped of his degree as a dunce), for I set down nothing but what I had from his own mouth, I told him, I supposed he had been idle: but he affirmed to the contrary: assuring me, he was really dull, which, if true, is very surprising."—*Memoirs of Mrs. Pilkington*, Vol. I., p. 69. (Dublin, 1748.)

† Mr. Forster, as has been explained to me by the authorities of Trinity College, has made a slight mistake in the interpretation of the College symbols: *Th.* standing not for *Theology*, as he supposed, but for the *Thema*, or Latin Essay, which each student was expected to produce.

are marked in the roll thus: *Ph.* (or Physics), *G. L.* (or Greek and Latin), and *Th.* (or Thema).* In the first of these, Swift did "*male*," in the second he did "*bene*," and in the third, "*negligenter*." This very fairly corresponds with his own account of the points of failure in his college career. But it further explains the disputed words, *speciali gratiâ*.† The degree was obtained, not by examination, but by a scholastic disputation: an essential preliminary to this disputation being that a candidate should have completed a certain number of terms, and passed the usual terminal examinations in each. On the result of the examination, as given in the Roll, where he was defective in two out of three subjects, Swift could not have passed the terminal examination for Easter, 1685: he would therefore lose one of the twelve terms necessary before he could be admitted to the disputation. Strictly, his graduation might have been postponed for a year: but in Swift's time, it was usual to grant a *specialis gratia* to meet such cases, for which a supplemental examination appears, shortly after Swift's time, to have been permitted.‡ This disposes very simply of the lurid picture drawn by one biographer after another, of Swift's erratic and rebellious self-assertion; and shows him only as a youth, chafing at his own position, seeking to discover his own bent, and yet regretting the loss of any chances of independence which his college career might have brought. That he was no idle and reckless rebel against authority is sufficiently proved by

* The facsimile of the roll is given in Mr. Forster's "Life of Swift," p. 38.

† For this explanation, which did not occur to Mr. Forster, I am indebted to a note in Dr. Salmon's volume, *Non-Miraculous Christianity*, p. 224 (1881).

‡ Dr. Salmon adds: "The evidence, then, would lead us to think of Swift not as an idle undergraduate, but as one who confined his studies to subjects which interested himself, neglecting some parts of the prescribed curriculum. His shortcomings were not very great, and were treated with every indulgence: and no doubt, if he had been an idle man, it would not have hurt his pride so much as it would seem it did, that any indulgence should have been necessary."

his life-long friendship for Dr. St. George Ashe, the tutor of the college under whose care he was placed.*

To understand Swift's feeling, we must remember, on the one hand, that he belonged to a rich and well-to-do family, but that, on the other, he held the position therein, perhaps in great measure hidden from the world, and not on that account the less irksome, of a poor relation. Outwardly he had the same education as his cousins. But he felt that the education was grudgingly bestowed, and doubtless exaggerated to himself, as most men so placed would naturally do, the degradation of the position. Angry and discontented, he cared little to look into the future, to forecast his power of achieving independence, or even to set himself, with any steadfastness of purpose, to achieve that independence by definite means. He had not learned to conquer difficulties by patient self-control, but brooded over them, varying the brooding, in these early days, by occasional outbursts of fiery and spasmodic, rather than vigorous, self-assertion.

After his bachelor's degree, Swift had set himself with much earnestness of purpose to systematic reading. Even thus early he had a good acquaintance with the classics, and already it would seem had begun the study of the new school of French literature. There is a story, which depends, however, only on the evidence of Deane Swift, that the *Tale of a Tub* was seen in its original form during these College days by a fellow-student of the name of Waring. But the story carries its own contradiction, and is no doubt a mistake arising from the fact that Waring, after the year when we know the

* There is a curious reminiscence of Swift's college days by one who was amongst his bitterest foes in later life, and who could find no very damning accusation to bring against these early years. It is to be found in Burdy's "Life of Skelton" (Works, I. xx.), where Dr. Baldwin, the violent whig provost of the college in Swift's old age, is spoken of. "He had an utter aversion to Dean Swift, because he was a tory, and used to say scornfully of him, that he was remarkable for nothing else, while in the college, except for making a good fire. He would not allow his college-woman, he said, to do it, but took that trouble on himself."

Tale was written (1696), had abundant opportunities of meeting Swift at Belfast, and may then have seen the book. There is no sign in Swift of precocity of genius; and for the present, at twenty years of age, it was enough that he should acquire, without attempting to produce. But before his Master's degree was obtained, Swift's reading was abruptly stopped. The resources to which he had hitherto trusted, became less certain and finally altogether failed.

Godwin Swift, wealthy as he had been, was now a poor, almost an insolvent, man. His sternness to his nephew, or what the nephew interpreted as sternness, had perhaps not a little to excuse it. As one enterprise after another failed, the store of money dwindled; his nerves were shattered; ultimately, what may, to some extent, have been a family scourge of insanity, fell on him, and his mind gave way. His death soon followed, in 1688.

But Swift had other relations, for whom he retained a sincere attachment. To his uncle William, he afterwards recalls the early favours he received from him, whom he calls "the best of his relations."* His uncle Adam gave him prudent advice as to a love episode of his younger years.† To his cousins Willoughby and Deane Swift,‡ the sons of Godwin, who settled in Lisbon as merchants, he had, as it appears, the most friendly feelings. By their kindness, the lack of supplies did not operate very suddenly after his uncle Godwin's death.

Swift, according to Deane Swift,§ was once gazing from his window in the college quadrangle, brooding over his own straits, when he saw a master-mariner wandering about the

* See Deane Swift's Essay, p. 56. The expression occurs in a letter from Swift at Moor Park, to his uncle, dated Nov. 29, 1692.

† "My uncle Adam asked me one day in private, as by direction, what my designs were in relation to you." *Swift to Miss Jane Waring*, May 4, 1700.

‡ Letter to Deane Swift (the elder), June 3rd, 1694.

§ Who tells it on the authority of Mrs. Swanson, the daughter of Willoughby Swift, to whom a characteristic letter, the MS. of which is in Trinity College library, was written long after by the Dean.

court, and looking for some particular door. After some delay, the sailor turned to Swift's own chamber: asked his name, and announced that his errand was then and there to hand over a sum of money sent by the cousin in Lisbon. Swift would fain have rewarded the man for the conscientious performance of his commission: but all reward was refused, and Swift valued the new gift too keenly to repeat the offer. From that time dated, according to Swift himself, the rigid accuracy of his economy. The half-extravagant youth, grumbling at the source of his subsistence, but unwilling to restrict its cost, now learned a new lesson of thrift, and resolved that this gift, as it was the most welcome, should also be the last. Henceforward he stood on his own feet.

No one more earnestly desired to win for himself place and power than Swift now did; no one had greater resources with which to win them; yet few lacked more entirely that mental discipline which might guide, and regulate, and effectively apply, these resources. But if he hesitated, events soon came which forced him to break with Ireland. The Revolution gave the signal for anarchy to be again let loose in Ireland under Tyrconnel, only to end in a fierce civil war, setting ablaze all those hatreds of race and religion which had been smouldering since 1641. It was another of those disturbances of which the youthful University of Queen Elizabeth had, in its less than a century of life, seen so many. Money or no money, Swift was forced to seek his fortune elsewhere. Driven by stress of circumstances from Dublin, he went to England, and first sought his mother's home in Leicester. Tenderly as he loved her, their long parting, and the lack of her sympathy and care, had been the most bitter aggravation of all the discontent of these early years; and now he could hardly come to her with much hope. He was ambitious, but he had no clear views as to his own future. He was unprepared to submit to the discipline of routine. His experience as a youth had been the worst a man can have—that of the poor relation subsisting

on the fortuitous alms of his richer kinsmen. The impression had burned itself in on his memory, and the seared spot remained. He had received from his uncle, as he said long after, "the education of a dog." To unsympathetic ears, there may still be something in the retort, "that with the ingratitude of a dog he repaid it." But, without sympathy, few passages of Swift's life are fairly to be judged.

Such was Swift when, at the age of one-and-twenty, he again met his mother, whom he had seen only at rare intervals during more than fifteen years. We are not without means of judging what manner of woman this mother was. Slight, comparatively, as is the place she holds in Swift's biography, hers was clearly a character likely to leave its impress on her son. From Deane Swift, we learn, perhaps on the authority of Swift's own reminiscences, some traits of her simple and orderly life, of her quiet tastes and of her unobtrusive cheerfulness.* But she was not without something of her son's wayward humour, breaking out at times in a manner more characteristic than decorous. On one of her visits to Dublin she lodged in the house of Mrs. Brent in George's Lane.† Her landlady was scandalised one day by being asked "whether she could keep a secret?" In utmost confidence she was then told that her lodger had a gallant in the town, who would presently come to pay his addresses. But no one was to know the secret. The gallant soon came; was admitted with due mystery; and in this character, so full of bewildering interest for poor Mrs. Brent, Swift continued for some time to visit his mother.‡

* "She was very exact in all the duties of religion * * * A very early riser, and always dressed for the whole day at about six o'clock in the morning, in a mantua and petticoat, which according to the fashion of those times she constantly wore. * * * Her chief amusements needlework and reading. * * A woman of an easy, contented spirit." *Deane Swift's Essay*, p. 23.

† Dr. Lyons tells the story on Swift's own authority.

‡ Mrs. Brent's sufferings under these vagaries were rewarded in later years by her appointment as Swift's "Walpole," the title she bore as his housekeeper. Her daughter, Mrs. Ridgeway, succeeded her in office.

In later years we shall hear more of Mrs. Swift; and as long as her life lasted Swift's affection for her never failed. His visits to Leicester were frequent; and much as he disliked the meddlesome gossip of the provincial town,* he retained, for her sake, some attachment to the place. They met now at a most critical period of his life, while his powers were still in fusion, while his mind was restlessly demanding employment, and when, as he tells us, "a person of great honour in Ireland (who was pleased to stoop so low as to look into my mind) used to tell me that my mind was like a conjured spirit, that would do mischief if I would not give it employment."† The mischief now consisted only of flirtations which made his mother uneasy, though they were no more than thoughtless pastimes for her son. But after those few months, the eagerness to go further afield grew stronger. His mother's slender resources could not suffice for two: and Swift was too wise to allow, in early manhood, the renewal of those ties of dependence on well-to-do relations, which had tried him so hardly even in youth. It was time for him to seek an opening into some wider career.

The choice he made was one suggested by his mother. Being related to the wife of Sir William Temple, she had some claim upon his aid; and Temple's family had some associations with the Swift family in Ireland.‡ Application was made to Temple for employment, and met with a ready response. Before the close of 1689, Swift had quitted Leicester to enter on an engagement with Sir William Temple, at Sheen. He had now before him a new experience; that of dependence, half-

* "The people is a lying sort of a beast (and I think in Leicester above all parts that ever I was in)." *Swift to the Rev. John Kendall*, Feb. 11, 169⅔.

† This occurs in the letter to Mr. Kendall (Feb. 11, 169⅔). The person of honour has been identified with Lord Berkeley, but on no grounds that are even plausible.

‡ There seems to have been a considerable intimacy between Godwin Swift and Sir John Temple, the father of Sir William, though not so close, probably, as Deane Swift seeks to make out. *Essay*, p. 33

menial and half-confidential, on the bounty of a stranger, as hard, in its own way, to stomach, as dependence on the grudging charity of a kinsman. About the terms, the duration, and the nature of this employment, much unnecessary controversy has arisen.

Sir William Temple, on retiring from public life in 1680, had gone to live at Sheen near Richmond. After a time, anxious to secure still further quiet, he had bought an estate near Farnham, forty miles from town, amidst the furze and heather of a wide tract of Surrey common. Here he retired in November, 1686: built a house, and occupied his time in the laying out of his garden and ground, after the fashion he had learned during his embassies in Holland. When the troubles of 1688 broke out, Temple returned for a time to the house at Sheen, which he had abandoned to his son. Here he stayed for some eventful months. At first he forbore to give any active assistance to the Prince, long as he had been his friend. For a time he even refused to allow his son to join the invading army. But presently, either his scruples were overcome, or his doubts as to the success of the Prince were removed. His son joined the Prince, and undertook for him some very delicate negociations in Ireland. But the business miscarried, and despair led young Temple to take his own life in April, 1689. For a while longer Sir William Temple stayed at Sheen, where his presence was needed to arrange his son's affairs.

But he was anxious to get away. He looked upon Sheen as a merely temporary abode; and recent associations would not tend to reconcile him to it. Before the close of 1689 he had returned to his favourite retreat of Moor Park.

The house at Moor Park still remains. It was a roomy, even a luxurious house, nestling, after the fashion and taste of the day, at the foot of tree-clad ridges, which rise abruptly from the sweep made by the drive in front of the entrance to the house. Over the door there still remains the Temple coat of

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arms, marking that dignity which the owner of the mansion never allowed himself to forget. Behind lie the well-ordered gardens and the trim canal, still preserving something of the Dutch taste which guided Temple, recalling as it did the scenes of his diplomatic triumphs, and at the same time appealing to the sympathies of his king. Across the garden and the trim canal with its fish-pond, at the foot, there opens the view of Crooksbury Hill and the heathery commons near it. Two centuries have not weakened the impression of trim and orderly dignity and prosperity which hangs about the house, placed amid scenes which had all the quiet, but none of the gloom, of the dreary tracts of green land that Swift had known about Kilkenny. Close by were the ruins of Waverley Abbey, beautiful even in decay. Two miles off in the opposite direction, lay the thriving old town of Farnham, overhung by Farnham Castle, the pride of English episcopal residences, and of all things most likely to impress a stranger, young and fresh from Ireland, as an outward type of the dignity and calm of the English Church. A few minutes' walk from the house is Mother Ludlam's cave, the scene of stories well known to Surrey traditions. Much as Temple's house might be the resort of visitors, a few minutes' walk in any direction could bury the student in the wildest and loneliest of woods and commons.

To this scene it was that Swift came, with his new patron, from Sheen. He is not himself very clear as to this first residence with Temple, and we have now and then to balance some trifling discrepancies in the accounts. But they are no more serious or more important than would occur in the hurried reminiscences of any man, writing of the details of his youth when he had reached mature age. He tells us in the autobiographical fragment, that Temple, before Swift joined him, had "retired to Moor Park." This is scarcely inconsistent with the view that Swift came with Temple from Sheen to Moor Park, as he himself says he did only a few lines

below. Temple had already retired to Moor Park, in the sense that he had already chosen it for his fixed abode: Swift joined him there, went with him to Sheen, and afterwards accompanied him there from Sheen, not on his first removal to the new abode, but on his return after the emergencies which had forced him back for a time to Sheen, were over.

At Sheen, King William had frequently visited his friend Temple: and there Swift may first have seen him. But Swift's position at first in Temple's household was clearly a very humble one. He read to, and wrote for, his patron, kept the accounts, and made himself useful as a sort of superior valet. It is scarcely likely that while thus employed he came in any way under the notice of the king, as we know eventually that he did. During Temple's illness, when he could not move from the house, the king was accompanied by Swift in walks round Temple's garden. We may safely place the locality of the story at Moor Park; and the king, as we know from Lady Giffard, Temple's widowed sister and biographer, did visit Moor Park at least on one occasion as he drove from Winchester to town.* We need not then suppose that it was during Swift's earlier days with Sir William at Sheen, while he was still the awkward and unfledged student, uncertain of his own powers, impressed with his own inexperience, and filling an irksome post halfway between a servant and a clerk, that the king chose to single him out for notice: but we may, quite as consistently with the evidence, and with far more probability, conceive that notice to have been bestowed in the later days of the Moor Park residence, when Temple

* In the short Life which Lady Giffard prefixed to her brother's works, she says, speaking clearly of the period after his second retirement to Moor Park, "that he had the honour of a visit from the king on his way from Winchester, and used to wait upon him at Richmond and Windsor." An old painting, of which there is now a copy at Moor Park, shews the arrival of the king and his suite at the house: and confirms, if any confirmation is needed, the fact that it was here, and not, as has generally been assumed, at Sheen, that Swift's acquaintance with the king began. Nor did Temple's illness confine him much to the house till about 1693.

had learned Swift's worth, when he leant upon his help, and when Swift had been able, as he could long afterwards boast, to prove himself not quite useless for higher duties.*

Temple, into whose service Swift now entered, although no heroic character, was a good specimen of his time. He was honourable and of strict integrity, but with some lack of zeal; with high and even romantic ideas of the past, but able to see with cold and unbiassed reason the advantages of the present, and unwilling to make many personal sacrifices for any conviction: employed in important transactions, but playing in them the part rather of a shrewd adviser and an upright and diligent agent, than of a director or originator: no abettor of the worst schemes of ministers, but on friendly terms with those avowedly responsible for these schemes. He never forgot what was due to his own sense of honour. He was nice in his adherence to truth and delicate in avoiding any wrongful gains when these, apparently, were within his reach. Nor need we conceive of him as a man of cold exterior or repulsive austerity. On the contrary his temper was warm, though kept well under restraint. He was self-indulgent by nature, and loved to give pleasure to those around him, from a certain ease and inclination of humour. He had no wish to force either himself or others to the observance of any very severe code of manners or of morals. His studies were those of the dilettante rather than of the student; but he had a ready interest in many things, if not a very absorbing interest in any. On the other hand, Sir William had about him some very petty traits. He was fitful and capricious in his humours, however philosophically he might write. He cared nothing for dishonest gains, but he seems to have looked very closely after those that were rightly his. Easy by nature, his overpowering self-conceit led him to adopt a pompous manner, and to talk perhaps as he has written, at undue length, on his own achievements. Some odd stories are told of his

* *Swift to Lord Palmerston*, Jan. 29, 172$\frac{8}{9}$.

habitual conceit: and in the case of one, the fact that it is given on the authority of Arbuthnot, might suggest that it owed its first recital, it may be a mischievously-inclined recital, to Arbuthnot's friend, and Temple's former dependant, Swift. Vexed at finding each of the collections which he was showing to Temple thrown into the shade by some superior possession of his own, on whose merits Temple dwelt, Lord Brouncker, we are told, at length very gravely replied: "Sir William, say no more of the matter: you must at length yield to me, I having lately got something which it is impossible for you to obtain, for my Welsh steward has sent to me a flock of geese: and these are what you can never have, since all your geese are swans."

Of the other inmates of the house, Lady Temple, the story of whose early days as Dorothy Osborne has in it much of romance, would naturally feel some interest in the youth, brought into her husband's employment as a poor kinsman of her own. She lived for five years more, but her place, as mistress of Moor Park, was in a great measure usurped by Lady Giffard, Temple's widowed sister, who, to a disposition as ardent as his, joined less of self-control: and, in spite of the ability that made her no contemptible defender of his fame, had faults of temper which finally caused an entire breach between her and Swift. But for us the chief interest of the circle lies elsewhere. It is in an adjunct of the household, formed of a Mrs. Johnson, widow of a confidential servant of Sir William's, and her two little daughters. The elder of these daughters was Esther Johnson, now in her eighth year, whose name was to be linked, in one of the strangest and yet tenderest episodes in the often strange and often tender annals of literary history, with that of the student outwardly so humble, but whose genius opened itself perhaps more quickly to this child than to any others of the circle amidst which he now moved. The position of the Johnson family seems to have been a doubtful

one, in the household: at times admitted by the leniency of Lady Giffard to be inmates of Moor Park, and at other times, as tradition has it, living in a little cottage on the confines of the property, which has transmitted to the modern lodge that has replaced it, the name of "Stella's Cottage." In a household so strangely formed, Swift had opportunities of observing other sides of human nature than those to be seen in the visits of king or courtier, and in the discussion of momentous movements in a nation's history. The small vanities of great men: the little local gossip: the notabilities of Farnham: the humours of the various inmates of the house —all these contributed to that which was even now his chief study, the knowledge of mankind.

This first residence began, as we have seen, towards the close of 1689. He came to it "a raw and inexperienced youth." Swift himself,* speaking from memory, and not probably desiring to dwell on details that might have been unpleasant to recall, says loosely that he stayed about two years. The residence, in reality, did not last even a year. Already his lifelong enemies, giddiness and deafness, had begun the attacks that were to continue with such persistency; and the advice of physicians gave him an excuse for returning to Ireland to recruit his health. It is clear enough, that this earlier residence, deep as was the mark it left on Swift's character, was not very pleasant on either side. Swift had as yet established little hold on Sir William's patronage, and may, from very ignorance and inexperience, or from boyish pride, have attempted to claim a position in the household which neither his master, nor others in the circle, were disposed to admit. Yet neither master nor dependant may have been willing to allow matters to go the length of an open breach, and the opportunity may readily have been seized of an excuse for the temporary return of Swift to Ireland. But the parting had no outward signs of ill-will on either side.

* Autobiographical Anecdotes.

In May, 1690, Swift went back to Ireland with a letter from Temple to his friend Sir Robert Southwell,* who had gone to Ireland as Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, in which Temple recommends Swift as an amanuensis, or, if that were possible, as a fellow of Trinity College; and speaks in favourable, if not in warm, terms, of Swift's services to himself. Swift's kinsmen are named, if not with the respect that equals might claim, at least not with the contemptuous ignorance which patronage assumes.† Nothing came of this recommendation, and Swift's visit to Ireland had opened to him no means of livelihood. But from a statement in one of his letters we learn that he returned to England in the autumn of 1691;‡ that he lived for a time in the country (we may safely assume that it was again with his mother at Leicester); and that after this, he returned on a visit to his patron, and settled again in Temple's house about the close of that year. The residence would therefore appear to have been interrupted for about a year and a half; but when renewed, it was on a totally different footing. Each had repented of the breach, and had found the aid of the other more necessary than he supposed. Temple was too shrewd an observer of men, and had been trained in too astute a school, to remain quite ignorant of the powers that lay buried under the uncouth exterior of this "raw and inexperienced youth." Swift, on his side, had not relished the renewal of Irish life after the smooth and polished society of

* The letter was first printed in Cunningham's edition of the "Lives of the Poets" (1854), vol. iii., p. 160.

† He "has good friends," says the letter, "though they have for the present lost their fortunes." The phraseology is curious in other parts of the letter. "He has Latin and Greek, some French, and writes a very good current hand, is very honest and diligent." As he might recommend a deserving clerk, Temple introduces to Southwell this youth, whose name was to outlive those of all the ex-ambassadors and secretaries of his day.

‡ Mr. Forster places the beginning of this second residence in August, 1690. But I see no reason to set aside the statement in Swift's letter to the Athenian Society, of Feb. 14, 169$\frac{2}{3}$, in which he says he "returned from Ireland about six months ago." Scott, xv., p. 255.

Moor Park, and had found no easy roadway to independence in the country of his education. Hardly had the second residence begun, before he found Temple ready to assist him by giving him the means of rising a step in the academic scale. His Dublin career had been cut short before he had attained the master's degree. But now he found means, with Temple's help, of becoming a graduate of Oxford. Of his residence there, and even how long it continued, we know little; but it cannot have been long. On the 23rd of May, 1692, he obtained the necessary certificate of his bachelor's degree from Trinity College: on the 14th of June, he was admitted on the same footing at Oxford: and on the 5th of July, he became a Master of Arts.*

He was now no longer a waif and stray in the battle of life, but renewed his services to Temple with a position in the land of his choice which he prized more than any which could have been given him in the land of his birth and education. "He had been obliged," he says of his Oxford experiences, "in a few weeks to strangers more than in seven years to Dublin College." We have his own account of his new position in Sir William Temple's household in terms that are too clear to admit of dispute, or to be based on imperfect recollection: "growing into some confidence," as he distinctly tells us, "he was often trusted with affairs of great importance."

* Swift belonged to Hart Hall, which afterwards developed into Hartford, or Hertford, College. The College was dissolved in 1805, but the name has been revived for Magdalen Hall, as now reconstituted.

CHAPTER II.

SWIFT'S FIRST YEARS OF MANHOOD, AND THEIR LESSONS.

1692—1696.

ÆTAT. 24—28.

The second residence with Temple—The influence of Oxford on Swift—His first literary efforts—The Pindarics—*Ode to Archbishop Sancroft*—*To Sir William Temple*—Swift and the Athenian Society—John Dunton—Dryden's criticism of Swift's early attempts—*The Address to William III.*—Swift as adviser of the king—What he learnt at Court—Swift's *Ode to Congreve*—*On Sir W. Temple's Recovery*—Desire for independence—His mental state and his experiences so far—His choice of a career—Ordination—An awkward application—Prebendary of Kilroot—The Irish Church in 1694—His life and companions at Kilroot—Varina—Growing irksomeness of his surroundings—Return to England, and what he brought with him.

With this second residence in Temple's house there opens for Swift a wider horizon. Step by step he is being drawn into that arena of busy life which now attracted and again repelled him, for which his impetuous spirit of command so far fitted him, at the same time that his intolerance of convention and discipline prevented his hoping for the success in it that smaller men might make sure of. Coming as it did when his mind was still unsettled, this new and larger opportunity of watching the inner movements of great affairs, fascinated Swift's imagination. At the quiet house amidst the Surrey wastes of heather he saw the coming and going of the men who were making the history of Europe, could observe their moods, and could measure their capacity. From this early glimpse he may first have acquired what he retained through life, and what so much fed his cynical humour, the sense of the marvellous contrast between the smallness of the men and

the vastness of the stake that was in their hands. From the first we see two tendencies at work in him. On the one hand the fixed lines of political opinion, the intricacies of political tactics, the abnegation of individual independence which a public life implied, repelled him: on the other, the prospect of power and influence, the excitement of stirring scenes, inspired him with a longing for the fray. The question must even thus early have occurred to him whether he would seek an entry into this arena, or strive by literature to obtain the social distinction which he confesses was what he desired to achieve. As yet he was all unsettled. Already, so he tells us, he had, during one period of enforced idleness, "writ and burnt and writ again, upon all manner of subjects, more than perhaps any man in England."* The struggles of early authorship frequently leave behind them an undue impression of their magnitude: but we may well take it that Swift's ineffective industry in these early days was laborious enough. Short as it was, his stay at Oxford, coming early in this second visit, was not without its permanent effect.

The Oxford that had given refuge to Cowley, that had expelled Locke, that had passed the famous Passive Obedience decree, was still imbued with the same spirit, and had not shifted her bearings amidst the storms of the revolution. With her political attitude Oxford had a special literary taste of her own, as well. The coterie of Christ Church was just then maintaining a somewhat unequal fight against the ponderous broadsides of Bentley, and already its leaning to the Tories was as clearly marked as that of its opponents to the Whigs. Its scholarship was not indeed profound, and was frequently worse than superficial; but it might, with some reason, claim the merit of elegance. Neither the political nor the literary tone of Oxford could be without effect on Swift. Oxford had been gracious to him; and the kindness shewn him there did much to arouse that underlying sympathy for Tory politics

* *Swift to the Rev. John Kendall*, Feb. 11, 169$\frac{2}{1}$.

which Swift shewed long before he quitted openly the ranks of the Whigs, in which his early connexion with Temple had naturally placed him.

It was at Oxford that Swift is said to have made his first literary effort, in a translation or paraphrase after the current fashion of the day, from one of Horace's odes.* It contains nothing beyond the ordinary trite moralities usual in a college exercise: but it is worth noticing, perhaps, that, without its being required to represent anything in the original, he makes the poet speak of himself, with the sarcastic reference that such a phrase would naturally imply, as one "unskilled in sneaking arts."

Other efforts accompanied, or followed shortly after this. Swift was caught by a current absurdity of taste. The popularity of Cowley, a popularity so great that even one so widely divergent from him as Milton, named him along with Spenser and Shakespeare as one of the three lights of English poetry, had not waned now after he had lain in his grave for more than twenty years. And strange to say, for the moment, it was not Cowley's more simple pieces which were remembered, but the more extravagant flights which he had attempted in his Pindarics. By a curious freak of judgment he had deemed that the most stately and dignified form of English poetry was a disjointed imitation of that style of Greek poetry, the merits of which are of all others the most difficult for a modern reader to appreciate. But Cowley and his contemporaries not only compelled themselves to appreciate, but trained themselves to imitate. The result was only a travesty of Pindar, that failed to stir one chord of real poetry. But the fashion spread. As Dr. Johnson says, "all the boys and girls caught the pleasing fancy, and they who could do nothing else could write like Pindar." Swift was caught by the fashion, which

* The 18th Ode of the 2nd Book:

"Non ebur neque aureum
Mea renidet in domo lacunar," &c.

was then so prevalent in Oxford, that even a Latin poem had been written in accordance with what was believed to be Pindar's chaotic contempt for scansion. Swift's attempt is said to have been suggested by Sir William Temple and his wife: and his efforts in this kind, if they have little literary merit, at least show us something of his intellectual growth. His Pindarics include an address to Archbishop Sancroft, on his refusal of the oaths in 1689: another to Sir William Temple; and lastly one to the Athenian Society; all of which give evidence of wide reading, introduced with an amplitude of allusion that makes their meaning often hard to decipher. But, for all that, they are not without interest. Their form is the pedantic one borrowed from Cowley's school: but, here and there, they have a force that implies rather a reminiscence of Dryden's muse. The ode to Sancroft, addressed to him when he was founding that sect of the Non-jurors, which Swift's maturer wisdom condemned, shows us how high Swift placed that insistance on the Church's privileges which afterwards broke his own alliance with the Whigs. Sancroft's self-inflicted martyrdom might be condemned by the School of politicians amongst whom Swift now moved: it might, at a later day, seem even to him over-strained; but it nevertheless commanded from him the tribute of admiration due to honesty and principle. Obscure and disordered as it is, the Ode has an occasional literary interest from points of likeness or contrast to his later work. The conceit which represents Sancroft's virtue as brightening even the gloom of popular condemnation, as the evening rays of the sun shine through a cloud, has something strangely unlike Swift's later manner.

> "Why should the Sun, alas! be proud
> To lodge behind a golden cloud?
> Though fringed with evening gold the cloud appears so gay,
> 'Tis but a low-born vapour kindled by a ray."

But there is something, on the other hand, of his later touch in the simplicity of lines like these:—

"Reformers and physicians differ but in name,
One end in both, and the design the same:
Cordials are in their talk, while all they mean
Is but the patient's death, and—gain."

There is still more, perhaps, of his spirit, in the hope that, through the "peevish knowledge" of the multitude,

"Each line shall stab, shall blast, like daggers and like fire."

The Ode to Temple is interesting, not only as showing Swift's entire and genuine respect for his patron, but for the glimpses it gives us of his early thoughts. Even then, he had found food for satire in watching the conduct of great affairs.

"The wily shafts of state, those juggler's tricks,
Which we call deep designs and politics,
(As in a theatre the ignorant fry,
Because the cords escape their eye,
Wonder to see the motions fly;)
Methinks, when you expose the scene,
Down the ill-organ'd engines fall;
Off fly the vizards and discover all.
How plain I see through the deceit!
How shallow, and how gross, the cheat!"

Already he professes to abhor the "lumber of the schools:" already he turns from what he deemed the useless labour of "digging in the leaden mines of philosophy." But a dislike of philosophy which did not at a later day interfere with his marvellous powers of making abstract thought luminous, does not now prevent him from indulging in laboured metaphysical efforts which take refuge in obscurity.

The last of these Pindaric odes was written for the approval of the newly-started Athenian Society—a pedantic gathering, with exalted aims in social science, which experience taught Swift, like the rest of the world, to laugh at, but to which youthful enthusiasm and want of judgment led him, in 1692, to pay the current homage. John Dunton, with whom originated this scheme of an Athenian Society for the encourage-

ment of universal learning, was a clever, wayward, and half-mad publisher, whose literary schemes or scribblings turn up at various corners from the Revolution to the close of the reign of George I. Bound apprentice to a bookseller, he first pushed himself into a little notoriety as a leader of the Whig apprentice boys at the close of the reign of Charles II. In 1684 he set up as a bookseller himself, and his connexion with the Dissenters gave a sanctimonious colouring to many of his later attempts. He strengthened this religious connexion by a marriage with the daughter of Dr. Samuel Annesley, the dissenting minister,—another of whose daughters became the mother of John and Charles Wesley. But the break-up of the Whiggish interest after Monmouth's expedition came to an abortive end, destroyed poor Dunton's credit: and, with his stock of Puritan books and pamphlets, he was forced to start for New England. After some further wandering, he returned to London and opened once more a bookseller's shop, on the very day that William of Orange entered the city. Now began ten years of considerable activity, when a stream of worthless and ephemeral literature, distinguished and attracting only by oddity of title, poured from his press. He attained a little civic dignity: and the "world," as he tells us, "smiled upon him." The main principle of his business as of his life was, "to think or perform something out of the beaten road." One amongst six hundred other schemes which were hatched with feverish rapidity in his addled brain, was this of the Athenian Society, started in 1689. Samuel Wesley, his brother-in-law, seems for a time to have helped him: and to the wheels of such a crazy chariot was it that Swift bound his first literary venture. It is a proof partly of that nervous distrust of himself which Swift always felt: partly of that whimsical judgment as to others by which he was often misled.*

* Dunton's venture closed in 1695: and afterwards marrying a rich wife, with whom he quarrelled, he left for Dublin to get quit of her: started a

Swift's own contribution to the motley collection of the Society, hardly merits better company. It is inflated, disordered, often impenetrably obscure, and it abundantly justifies the criticism of these early efforts of Swift which tradition ascribes to Dryden. To his great kinsman, then the dictator of literature, Swift had submitted these efforts, with what we may well believe, from his subsequent sensitiveness, to have been more than usual diffidence. The youthful author of such poems might feel his powers, but in spite of himself, he must have been conscious of their misapplication. He was met by a rebuff, and what is hardest of all to bear, a prophetic rebuff. "Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet," said Dryden: * and, perhaps all the more because of the truth that there was in the prophecy, it was never forgotten or forgiven. And if Swift was not a poet, he had in store another weapon fully as potent for revenge.

But poor as the piece is, immature as are its thoughts, immersed as it is in that purely wordy metaphysic for which Swift afterwards conceived the most supreme contempt, still it is not without interest. Chiefly, and above all things, it bears in every line the impression of a mind ill at ease with itself and its surroundings, discontented with the anarchy of

bookselling business there, and has left us (what again touches upon Swift's life), one of the most lively accounts of Dublin at the close of the 17th century which we possess. He wrangled with Dublin booksellers, persecuted his wife and her mother in print, and busied himself over an account of his "Life and Errors," which he wrote while hiding from his creditors. Coming back to London about 1705 he betook himself to political pamphleteering. In 1710 he published a crazy heroic poem on his Athenian projects, and at the close of Anne's reign we find him one of the Whig writers, and amusingly elevated by a sentence of Swift's satire into a prominence that pleased him, and insulted the really powerful Whig pens. At a later date, we hear of him attempting to set up a lottery scheme. But his own kinsfolk would have nothing to say to it: and this poor, crazy, but quick-witted, oddity sank into obscurity, perhaps into absolute insanity: and died in 1733.

* Johnson gives the story without stating his authority: Warton also gives it on the authority of Mr. Elijah Fenton.

public taste, and seeking some possible help from an Academy, even though its ruling spirit should be of texture so mundane as poor Dunton. There is a touch of genuine feeling and something of originality of thought in this outburst, where he describes the unsympathetic and impersonal reward which comes in the shape of posthumous renown:

"Were I to form a regular thought of Fame,
Which is, perhaps, as hard to imagine right
As to paint Echo to the sight,
I would not draw the idea from an empty name;
Because, alas! when we all die,
Careless of ignorant posterity,
Although they praise the learning and the wit,
And though the title seems to show
The name and man by whom the book was writ,
Yet how shall they be brought to know,
Whether that very name was *he*, or *you*, or *I*?"*

The unsuccessful attempt so evident here, to force words to express a whim or fancy rather than a clear idea, is striking in its very contrast with that which is most characteristic of Swift's later writing, the power of representing even such a fancy without sacrificing absolute clearness, and without admitting anything involved either in word or in thought.

With these Pindarics we may join, as belonging to the same period, an address to William III. on his successes in Ireland, written, probably, to improve the occasion of some passing affability which the King had shown to Swift. It repeats only too faithfully in its involved and hollow panegyric, the style of the Court poet of the Restoration: and shows little

* There is something here, of contrast as well as of likeness to the passage in the *Tale of a Tub*, where he describes Fame as "a blessing which we mysterious writers can seldom reach, till we have gotten into our graves: whether it is that fame, being a fruit grafted upon the body, can hardly grow and much less ripen till the stock is in the earth: or whether she be a bird of prey, and is lured among the rest to pursue after the scent of a carcase: or, whether she conceives her trumpet sounds best and farthest when she stands on a tomb, by the advantage of a rising ground, and the echo of a hollow vault."

more than that Swift was a sound adherent of the Revolution, and retained a vivid remembrance of the Irish ills which had required William's intervention.

In 1692, the possessor of an Oxford degree, and the trusted confidant of Temple, Swift was beginning to take counsel as to his future. He was not to take orders, he says in one of his letters at this time, till the king gave him a prebend:* but this very condition implies that his career was so far fixed. Ambition he had in plenty: but he knew, and had already said himself, that two things would thwart that ambition: the "cold temper" that was so apt to chill all his efforts, all his deepest emotions, into cynicism; and the "unconfined humour," that was to ride rough-shod over so many cherished prejudices. Already he had decided that no imprudent act should cause him to enter on the struggle hand-tied, and that no impetuousness of youth should entangle him into giving hostages to fortune, or cumbering himself with responsibilities, which would curb independence. A certain appearance of mental callousness, and a certain severity of self-repression were to be achieved by him: and setting these before him, he chose to call the outside that he presented to the world "a cold temper." The interest of his mental growth lies in the very process by which he did achieve them: by which the writer of the half-plaintive conceit about the impersonality of posthumous fame, came to be the author, and that only in a very few years' time, of the grave piece of irony in which such posthumous fame is ridiculed either for its love of carrion, or because it loves to sound its trumpet over the echo of a hollow tomb; in which the youth, straining after metaphysical disquisition, and involving himself in hopeless obscurity, comes to be the derider of philosophy, and the writer of the most rigidly simple prose in our language.

With this process of self-discipline, to which Swift submitted

* *Swift to Mr. William Swift*, Nov. 29, 1692.

himself, the discipline of life was also widening his experience. Already, as we have seen, he had come into contact with the king. If we may believe the gossip of Deane Swift, William offered him a captaincy of dragoons, and amused himself by teaching the obscure secretary the Dutch way of cutting asparagus, as they walked together in Temple's trim garden at Moor Park. Now Swift was to have a connexion with courts of a more serious sort. It was in the spring of 1693 that William was in grave doubt about the expediency of assenting to the Triennial Bill. Harassed by suspicion, thwarted in the scheme that lay nearest to his heart, William had come to doubt the motives of every suggestion that came from an English parliament and from English ministers. New to English rule, and unable to gauge the real meaning of the Revolution, he clung to that power of veto which was already an anachronism. It was to Temple that the king turned in his difficulty: pressed to pass the Bill, he sent his Dutch confidant, Lord Portland, to consult Temple on the point. Both the king and Portland, imperfectly acquainted with the events of the Rebellion, had conceived the idea that it was by assenting to a similar Bill that Charles I. had lost his throne and his head. Temple was shrewd enough to see the absolute necessity for the assent being given: and perhaps feared that, whatever the results of the Bill might be, delay was still more dangerous. He did his best with Portland: and doubtful whether such a messenger could represent faithfully views which he himself was too ill personally to lay before the king, he sent his secretary to state his arguments in his stead. For the first time Swift found himself intrusted with an affair of supreme importance. The collision was threatening, and yet the king was blind to the danger. He had to be moved not by warnings, for these might only have stirred his pride, but by suggestions that the Bill was not really any limitation of the prerogative. Swift's historical studies were now called into play, to defend advice, good in itself, but which had to be made palatable to the king

on what it is to be feared were false grounds. The mission failed, and the Bill was for the time postponed: but this contact with the Court was the first thing, Swift tells us, "that helped to cure him of vanity."* The expression is perhaps purposely ambiguous: but we may take it to mean such vanity as the self-centred broodings of the scholar might create, but the experience of large affairs was likely soon to dissipate.

But apart from occasional contact with the busy world, Swift's chief occupation was still study, his chief ambition still to excel in literature. Leaving Pindarics, from which the stunning criticism of his cousin Dryden had perhaps dissuaded him, Swift still held to serious poetry—still found in poetry, whatever its nominal occasion, a channel for the release of that moodiness of spirit which tormented him. William Congreve, his old school-fellow at Kilkenny, and companion at Trinity, was now rising into the first rank in literature, and basking in the sunshine of aristocratic whig patronage. In spite of the brilliant success of his comedies, adverse criticism, prompted, or which friendly judgments might deem to be prompted, by envy and ill-will, had already assailed him: and Swift, still an unknown aspirant, addressed a poem to his old friend and schoolfellow, which though it shook off the form, yet preserved much of the style of thought, of the Pindarics. More striking than any of the previous pictures, is that which it gives of Swift's pent-up spirit, fretting at the confinement of Moor Park, gauging the vanities and vulgarities of the foplings that passed for wits, and scorning their empty artificiality: tracing the typical dunce from "Farnham School" to town, and back again to Farnham with his broken jargon of fashionable witticisms, where he "squandered his rising talents to the face" of the unknown dullard, Swift: and above all coming ever closer

* The Autobiography is the source of the anecdote, at the date of which Swift speaks of himself as under one-and-twenty. In fact, he was in his six-and-twentieth year, when the Triennial Bill was before the King.

to a measure of his own capacities, and to a forecast of his own future, and of the terrible power he was to wield;

> "My hate, whose lash just heaven has long decreed,
> Shall on a day make sin and folly bleed."

The praise is well turned and sincere in which he credits Congreve with "a richer vein and cleaner ore" of poetic fancy: but it is also characteristic, that praise of the poet soon gives place to satire of the town and its follies.

A month later, at the close of 1693, we come to the last of these early poems that we possess. It is an ode on Sir William Temple's recovery from illness, as pompous and insincere as such outbursts generally are. With the fulsome flattery that was common to the day, but sat so ill on Swift, it mingles symptoms of the gnawing discontent that breaks out at the thought of the dependent position in which, with all the possibilities that he felt within him, he was still placed, and still likely to remain. To be Sir William Temple's trusted secretary, was better than to be what he had been before, a sort of upper servant: but it was still torture to a mood and temper such as Swift's. He had already, while in Temple's service, shaken off the awkwardness of the obscure and self-absorbed student, and, with some knowledge of the world, he might well wish to play a larger part therein.* But that he knew and could on occasion assert his own dignity only made Swift's position the more irksome at Moor Park. Smooth down the picture of the relation between the two as we may, it yet remains certain, that between Temple and Swift comparatively little sympathy could exist. They might mutually respect one another: they might agree in certain opinions: they might

* We have some proof of this in a curious little anecdote recalled to him thirty years later by Lord Castledurrow, who remembered how, in his boyhood, he and Swift had been abused by a drunken boatman about his fare, and had been surrounded by an angry crowd, whose threatenings had been calmed only by the demeanour of Swift producing in the crowd the pacifying effect of the "vir pietate gravis" of Virgil.

feel that each owed the other some gratitude, and on suitable occasions they might each take an opportunity, in well-balanced language, to express it. But after all it remains an unchangeable fact, that no two characters could be more unlike. All that made Swift's strength—his absolute intolerance of convention, of authority, of pedantry: his power of detecting what was unreal or pretentious: his morbid desire to probe sores, to spare no smiling surfaces, to cut into the quick—all these are the very opposite of what can have suited Temple, or have allowed peace to his serene self-complacency. In the house of his patron, Swift must not only have felt that his talents were lost, but that he could not freely express his own thoughts. With some men that suppression might have been well; with Swift, already painfully straining at a process of self-torture, which a larger sphere of active work might have made less intense, it could only have been entirely ill. It is clear from these early poems, even through the mist of conventional eulogy under which he spoke, that Swift prized above all things his honesty and independence: that he saw how easily both might be lost: and that this dread inspired much of his discontent. All this appears in the poem on Sir William Temple's recovery. Inspired or dictated by the concern which it was becoming that the dependant should show in his patron's illness, the poem proceeds for the most part in the strain of subtilized exaggeration in which the "metaphysical" poets had imitated or travestied intensity of feeling. Ghastly fear had shaken each mind, as the Atheist's mind is shaken by the convulsions of nature; grief had traced its watery footsteps in Dorinda's * face, and had flung sables on each menial look:

* Dorinda is the poet's name for Martha, Lady Giffard. Dorothea is the name he gives to Dame Dorothy, Sir William's wife. It is she, and not Lady Giffard, as Mr. Forster by a slip of the pen asserts, that is described as "peaceful, wise, and great." Swift was conventional enough in these eulogies: but his picture of Dorinda is not quite so insincere as such flattery would imply. He detested her, and even the poem shows no affectation of regard.

the lackeys, in short, looked as grave as if the sun had gone out of heaven. Such are the stilted exaggerations which run through the piece. Then, by a strange device, his Muse appears to Swift, to listen to moralizings on the theme; and it is in these moralizings that we come to the real interest of the poem: for it is here that Swift, with no great amount of relevancy, describes his own condition. Of set purpose he is involved and obscure: for it was his object to pretend that the passion he felt tearing at his heart was caused by intense grief at his patron's malady. But in spite of himself he breaks beyond his theme, and at last bursts into this passionate remonstrance with the force within him that he felt was driving him from all easy converse with his fellow-men.

> "To thee I owe that fatal bent of mind
> Still to unhappy restless thoughts inclined;
> To thee, what oft I vainly strive to hide,
> That scorn of fools, by fools mistook for pride;
> From thee whatever virtue takes its rise,
> Grows a misfortune, or becomes a vice;
> Such were thy rules to be poetically great.
> 'Stoop not to int'rest, flattery, or deceit;
> Nor with hired thoughts be thy devotion paid;
> Learn to disdain their mercenary aid;
> Be this thy sure defence, thy brazen wall,
> Know no base action, at no guilt turn pale;
> And since unhappy distance thus denies
> T' expose thy soul clad in this poor disguise;
> Since thy few ill-presented graces seem
> To breed contempt where thou hast hoped esteem.'"

It is, perhaps, worth noticing how little some of the rhymes here correspond with the accuracy of Swift's later poetical efforts. But it is far more important to notice how every line is surcharged with personal reference, and how deep that misery that pursued Swift's later years had, even thus early, struck its roots. In the case of Swift, as with all men who begin the struggle of life by combating forces that, in the eyes of other men, are mere figments of a heated and disordered imagination, the question is sure to occur, what justification

was there for all this gloom and misanthropy? Before our sympathy is asked, have we not a right to know on what real troubles we are to spend it? On the answer to that question depends the feeling with which we shall pursue the life of Swift. If we cannot condone much to the child born and nurtured in dependence, taken from his mother's care before he could know its value; educated under the eye of a stern and grudging uncle; to one whose opening career was broken by the troubles of his country, and whose spirit, to the last degree passionate and impetuous, was harnessed to the methodical routine of a timid and somewhat pedantic master, unfit to take the measure of Swift's powers, but disposed to look upon their occasional assertion as the unwarranted although perhaps excusable eccentricities of an ill-trained youth: if to all this, and to the fact that the very strength and unruliness of his powers were a source of uneasiness and of foreboding to Swift, we are not prepared to excuse much, then the biography of Swift must bring to us not a strain of vivid human interest, but the perpetual irritation that powers, always great, but often restless, morbid, and undisciplined, must produce.

There was indeed one other very real and very terrible excuse for Swift. Amongst all the stories of mental struggle of which our literary annals are full, there is none which is so full of mysterious interest, as that of Swift. Beyond all the troubles of fierce temper, violent emotions and over-strained self-inspection; beyond all the ravages wrought upon a high-strung nature by years of dependence, poverty and repression; beyond the loneliness that came from his scornful pride, Swift had another burden to bear. This was the foreboding of mental darkness. Though insanity, even at the end, scarcely seemed to release him from the pains of self-consciousness, yet the dread of it hung over him ceaselessly through life. It was no process of gradual decay. Until it dealt its final and decisive blow, it neither clouded nor impaired the clearness of

his intellect. But ever-recurring pain warned him that the inevitable and unconquerable physical cause was there, and the struggle seemed only the more intense from the strength of the citadel that was at last to be overthrown. We shall have to return to this more than once when the symptoms become more marked; but thus much it is well to lay down at the outset of Swift's life. To say what he had to say with absolute simplicity: to be clear as to his own position and his own aims: to be misled by no abstractions—these were main objects in Swift's life. But, for all that, it was a life darkened by constant struggle, foreseeing defeat at last, and made melancholy by the physical inroads through which that defeat was finally accomplished.

Of these mere physical causes it belongs rather to medical science than to literary biography to speak. Their outward symptoms were those two maladies of giddiness and deafness which from the age of twenty to his death never for any long period left him. What they meant, how they arose, what tended to their aggravation, it is hard to say.* Swift himself was fond of recurring to the theory of some trifling occasion, such as an early surfeit of fruit or an accidental chill. On these, the first and last words have been spoken by Johnson; "The original of diseases," he says, "is commonly obscure; and almost every boy eats as much fruit as he can get, without any inconvenience." Swift no doubt felt in later years some injury to his health both from fruit and from chills. But with no undue confidence we may assert that the real source of the disease lay more deep; and medical investigation, if it does not absolutely prove, is at least consonant with the belief that he suffered from structural malformation near the brain. Whatever its character might be, that malformation never till the end obscured the marvellous lucidity of his thought, but

* In dealing with Swift's latest years, we shall necessarily be brought more into contact with the theories that have been advanced in explanation of the facts which Swift's biography discloses.

neither did it ever suffer him to forget the signs of disease that it produced. In Swift we have one whose clearness of intellectual vision never needs to ask for a lenient judgment, but whose moral depression calls from first to last for all the forbearance we can show.

But whatever the underlying troubles that vexed Swift's spirit, and were forcing their way through his immature attempts in literature, the question that now forced itself on him, and with increasing urgency as his position became both more doubtful and more irksome, was, how a livelihood could be gained at once permanent and independent. So long as Temple lived, it was clear that Swift would be welcomed as an inmate of Moor Park. The residence with Temple had done much for him. To what he there learned, some of the peculiar force that marks off his political pamphlets from all others, may perhaps be ascribed.* To the quiet and leisurely observation of men who had played large parts upon the world's stage, he had been able to join close attention to the moods and whims of the country bumpkins round Farnham. When opportunity offered, with his usual love of hard exercise, he used to make his way on foot to London, scanning then and on his many journeys to Leicester, the manners of the road, and learning much that he afterwards put to good account.† But much as he gained here, he gained it through a trying medium. Even the advantages, such as they were, might not all attend a longer residence: and meanwhile, the opportunity of gaining for himself a secure and independent position was rapidly passing. The previous course of his edu-

* By Lord Macaulay, in a well-known passage in the Essay on Temple, the part which this residence had in developing the practical power of Swift as a political writer, is described with something of rhetorical exaggeration, which ignores the natural genius of the man, and magnifies the force of circumstances. Unfortunately for this theory those political tracts which come nearest to his residence with Temple are indubitably the weakest.

† The story of his lodging at penny hedge-inns, and paying sixpence for clean sheets, is well known. Lord Orrery ascribes it to vulgarity: Johnson to curiosity or thrift.

cation, the want of any technical training for another profession, the opening for influence which it naturally, and almost alone, presented, had turned his thoughts to the Church.* But, he tells us, he had a scruple of entering the church merely for support. He was clearly in a difficult position. To Temple he had to represent his desire as that of securing an independence. Yet he hesitated to break with Temple and secure that independence in the only way open to him, until he found he could do it without the suspicion, to himself or to others, of a merely mercenary motive. Better than that might even be the acceptance of the king's offer of a captaincy of dragoons. It was needful to do what Swift hated, to press his patron for help: and thus it was that urged, perhaps, by his importunity, Sir William made an offer of a post which he knew Swift would be little inclined to accept, that of clerk at £120 a year in his own sinecure office of the Rolls at Dublin. As Temple no doubt expected, Swift refused. To have held a petty and subordinate post in the very law courts where some of his kinsmen had been, and where others still were, leading counsellors, would have wounded his pride to the quick. But Sir William's offer had at least taken away the possibility of any reproach hereafter that he had entered the ranks of the Church merely for what it had to give.

It was voluntarily, and not by compulsion, that he now accepted the career to which his connections, his education, his opportunities, possibly also his inclination, had turned his thoughts. In November, 1692, not long after his Oxford degree, as we have seen, he had this intention pretty clearly in view. From the king, in some of his frequent colloquies, he had obtained some hopes of a prebend, should one conveniently fall vacant: and he may even then have cherished those dreams which remained with him long after, of a secure retreat at

* "It is easier to provide for ten men in the Church than one in a civil employment." *Swift to Lord Peterborough*, 4 May, 1711. The same was probably Swift's opinion now, in his twenty-fifth year.

Windsor, where the temptations to the fray would have been far removed from him, and where genial ease and dignity might have brought to him a content which he fancied would not pall. But he complains of Temple as remiss in fulfilling his promises of aid: and the complaints ripened, till, at length, in May, 1694, he left Moor Park in pique. In telling of this break with the past,* he speaks of his intention of taking orders in September of that year. When he quitted Moor Park he went to his mother at Leicester, and finally to Ireland, soon after, in June, 1694, to be ordained. But he had still some difficulties to overcome. He was forgotten at Trinity College. It was long since he had taken his degree; and even had it not been so, the manner of taking it was not much in his favour. Certificates as to his conduct during these intervening years were absolutely necessary. Some of the Irish bishops were friends of his family, but they could not set aside the rules of decorum. A humble and irksome letter had therefore to be written to Sir William Temple to beg for a certificate.† The task was the more difficult as they had parted on terms that were at least cold, if they did not amount to an actual rupture. It must have gone sorely against the grain with Swift, to approach one from whom he thought he had merited more, and who yet judged, as he was well aware, that Swift had acted with absolute ingratitude. He knows "how much he is fallen in his Honour's thoughts." But he must throw himself "upon his Honour's mercy:" he can scarcely ask his Honour to deign to stoop to a thought of his affairs, but his faults have been follies or infirmities: and for these he would entreat leniency.‡

* "I left Sir William Temple a month ago, just as I foretold it to you: and everything happened thereupon just as I had guessed. He was extremely angry I left him: and yet would not oblige himself any farther than upon my good behaviour, nor would promise anything firmly to me at all." *Swift to Mr. Deane Swift* (the elder), June 3, 1694.

† The letter is dated 6 October, 1694.

‡ The letter, which Mr. Temple called Swift's "penitential letter," before printed from a transcript, has been printed from the original by Mr. Locker in his "Patchwork," p. 77. This shows the former version to have contained no important variations

Some men might have written such a letter, and learned only the lessons of prudence that the task inculcated: with Swift no experience was gained, but the boundless pride that was yet to make great men tremble, was wounded to the quick. To outward appearance the wound healed over. It says much, indeed, for the foundation of solid mutual respect that subsisted between Swift and Temple, that the humble letter had the effect of bringing the friends together. The certificate was promptly sent. Swift was ordained deacon on the 25th of October, 1694, by Dr. Moreton, Bishop of Kildare *: and priest on the 13th of January, 169¾. His family influence, which, fallen though it was, was still considerable, stood him in good stead: before the close of the month he was presented by Lord Capel, then Lord Deputy, to the prebend of Kilroot, near Belfast. From that day Swift was his own master.

The state of the Irish Church when Swift entered it was curious enough. At its head stood Michael Boyle, a Tory of the days of Charles II., now blind and incapable, but fitly representing in himself the tone which the Restoration had imparted to the Church of Ireland under the guidance of the later Stuart rule. The shock of the rebellion in 1641 had fallen upon what was in spirit as well as in fact to a great extent a missionary church. That shock had been met in a few cases with the pure missionary wisdom of men like Bishop Bedell, the "*ultimus anglorum*," whom even foes lamented.† But for the most part the Church bowed beneath the storm: and when the dawn of better things had come with the Resto-

from the original. I cannot agree with Mr. Forster in thinking the letter to be couched in no more than the conventional language of respect.

* The autobiography gives the name rightly, and Mr. Forster was in error in his correction of it. His mistake arose from a misreading of the signature to the orders of ordination. "*Gul. Darensis*" is William of Kildare, and not of Derry, as Mr. Forster supposed. *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Nov., 1879.

† Bishop Bedell died during the Irish Rebellion of 1641: and so universal was the respect in which he was held, that even the rebels turned out to fire a volley over his grave, calling out the words, "Requiescat in pace ultimus anglorum."

ration, it had found the Church ready to enjoy to the full the ease and comfort of to-day with little thought of the morrow. Such was the spirit typified in Boyle, now Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of the Church. A second shock came in 1688, to terrify and well-nigh annihilate the Church: and when this new struggle was over, it found itself restored to safety, but restored with very new conditions. When the Revolution settlment came, it formed a new type of leaders, such as Narcissus Marsh, successively Archbishop of Cashel, of Dublin, and of Armagh: and William King, afterwards, as Archbishop of Dublin, the friend and correspondent of Swift, but now Bishop of Derry. In some respects all seemed to go well with the restored Church: and when Swift was ordained, she was rising on the full tide of penal legislation against the Roman Catholics. The priests of that faith were to be driven from the shores of Ireland. To shelter them was to be high treason. To hold property, to pursue any money-yielding profession, was to be made difficult, and in some cases impossible, for a Roman Catholic. To seek an education in any of the Catholic seminaries abroad was forbidden to the Roman Catholic families. If a Protestant heiress married a Roman Catholic, her property was forfeited. All these laws had not yet been written in the statute-book: but the lines of the work which was meant to stamp out the proscribed religion, and to make the Protestant Church the symbol of conquest, were already laid: the programme of the campaign was already drawn up. But, on the other hand, if the Church felt any triumph in the abasement of her rival, there were flaws in her own prosperity. Much of her wealth had already fallen into the hands of laymen. Of her clergy many were starved. Of her benefices many were vacant. Congregations were scattered for want of room to house them. Her poor were uneducated. A Bill to provide more churches was set aside in 1698. Another for the erection of free schools, which might have helped to secure her influence and given her the hold on the

young which the Roman Catholic priest, in spite of persecution, was gaining, shared the same fate. The Church was to be taught that the dejection of her rival might secure her own safety, but would not swell her triumph: that should she be content to run in the political lines marked out for her, she might trust to protection, but could hope neither for enlarged dominion nor for spiritual freedom.

It is little wonder if some of the leaders of the Church were murmuring at the part which they were forced to play, and finding how hollow was the triumph which they had seemed to attain when Roman Catholic pretensions fell. The political governors of the kingdom held in their hands the powerful instruments which the penal statutes gave to them: but these were most useful when kept chiefly in reserve, and the political leaders were careful not to use them so as to make the Protestant Church too strong. "If one should measure our temper by our laws," says Bishop King in a letter to Bishop Burnet,† "I think we are little short of the Inquisition: but if by the execution of them, I doubt we shall seem as indifferent in matters of religion as our neighbours in Holland: whereas soft laws and strict execution are what wisdom and interest would recommend to us." The words were used when the temper of the nation, and of the leading churchmen, was being tried to the utmost, two years after Swift's ordination, by a bill which was to suspend the laws, for the sake of securing the king's person against danger. Enough of repressive power, it was felt, had been placed in the hands of the government. The liberties of the country were threatened by a hundred instruments which were lying *in terrorem*. To add to these was not to secure the safety of protestantism, but to seal the doom of freedom: and so first by the Lords, through the Bishops' influence, and then by the Commons, when it was revived in an amended shape, this obnoxious bill was rejected. Such was the state of the Irish

† *Mant's History of the Church in Ireland*, Vol. II. p. 80.

Church during the three or four years before and after 1694. The resistance in which the Church had appeared as the champion of national independence, was not, as we shall find, forgotten by the English government as a lesson for the future.

It was in a period so critical to the Irish establishment, that Swift joined her ranks. We find him settled at Kilroot early in 1695, with a living worth about £100 a year, of which his predecessor, the Reverend William Miln, had been deprived by a long-suffering church, for immorality.* Kilroot was a country district, with some small aggregate of houses, washed by the waters of Belfast Lough. The churchmen were woefully few when Swift went there: and tradition in the neighbourhood still tells how "the mad clergyman" vainly endeavoured to procure a congregation, by going to the shore, and gathering a crowd to see him "skip stones" into the sea.† Before very long Swift found friends in the neighbourhood. One was a Mr. Winder, a fellow-student at Oxford, now settled in the north of Ireland with a wife and family. Another was Waring, his friend at Trinity, of a rich Belfast family,‡ to whose sister, an heiress of some pretensions, Swift began, in want of other occupation, to show some attention. It was a weakness to which, as we saw in his short stay at Leicester in 1688, he had before been prone: against which he had been warned: but a "kind of folly," as he says,

* It is perhaps only fair to Miln, to say that a letter in the Armagh Library, from the Bishop of Down to the Bishop of Meath, seems to show that the sentence had been one of suspension only, and not of deprivation. But the incumbent himself, and others with him, had taken the worse view: and before it was corrected, Swift had been appointed to the cure, without protest from Miln. Only three years afterwards, the Bishop of Down makes application, unsuccessfully, on his behalf.—*MS. letter in Records of Armagh* (transcribed for me by Mr. Reynell).

† The tradition, like others of its type, would scarcely be worth repeating did it not serve, like them, to show the picture of Swift that has lingered in the minds of the people amongst whom he lived.

‡ They have given their name to Waring Street; and their descendants afterwards moved to Waringstown in County Down.

which he had thought himself able "to throw off at the porch" whenever he might choose to enter the church. The tendency, however, to attract, to advise, to become a guide and an influence, to women, was one not, in Swift's case, to be checked so easily as he had once imagined: and this time it led in the sequel to what was at least an unpleasant incident. When this new fit was still upon him, he wrote a letter to Miss Waring, under the title of Varina, half fantastic, half passionate, and showing the flimsy and exaggerated emotions which were to be fairly expected in such a case. When the letter was written,* he evidently was tired of his duties, or no duties, at Kilroot. Independence was much: but the banishment to a remote and Presbyterian locality was more than enough to balance even independence. To Swift, now as ever after, regret for what seemed to have passed from him was a stronger feeling than the determination to make the best of what was present. To add to his restlessness, Sir Wm. Temple, knowing his value, was now inviting him back to Moor Park, where a position was open to him, sure to be very different from that which, even during the second residence, had been his. Was he to continue, then, at Kilroot, out of the bustle and noise of the world, courting none of the great, and interfering in the struggles of his fellows, if at all, only by his pen: varying his abundant leisure, by fantastic lovemaking, and by inviting the sister of an old college companion, to settle along with him into a dull and colourless obscurity? Or was he, on the other hand, to yield to that impulse that called him in amongst the crowd of men, to take a part in stirring scenes? Was he to form of his clerical duties a different, and perhaps a more secular, idea than that which he had cherished in the first flush of self-exacting ardour, when these duties were still in the distance? On the eve of what, so far as we can gather, was meant only to be a short visit from Kilroot to his old patron, he wrote the letter to Miss Waring, offering his love in the

* It is dated 29th April, 1696.

usual language of over-wrought hyperbole, and asking hers in return with something of a peremptory tone, although he renounces all wish to touch her fortune. He was to start for England in a fortnight. If he could win her love, she might make of him what she would: he would spare no pains to push his advancement. When he wrote these words, they would suggest to the imagination of Miss Waring, not that kind of advancement that was ultimately his, but that which would gain the fancy of a woman bred to the every-day comforts of a Belfast citizen's home, and prepared by her dower to add some well-being to the Kilroot parsonage. If he could not win that love before he leaves Ireland, Ireland would see him no more, even were the king to send him back as deputy. What the lady's first answer was, we can only guess: but clearly it contained the conventional amount of temporising: and at least it served to convince Swift that he was not fitted to bear with the caprices of a silly woman, whose conduct seems to have brought first into play that side of Swift's character over which a biographer would gladly pass. For the present this love episode rested. The fortnight passed, and he was still free from any ties: and he left Kilroot, as he had announced, for his projected visit to England.* The prebend was entrusted to the care of his friend Winder, whose "fastenings to the world" made even the temporary incumbency a boon: and as a fact, Swift never visited Kilroot again as its prebendary.

What he brought from thence, for his mental equipment, so slowly acquiring completeness, we may perhaps guess with some accuracy. Amongst the solitudes of the sea-washed parish, he had learned how unfit he was to cultivate that quiet which he had fancied would suit him. Amongst the Presbyterians, who left his church empty, he conceived that violent prejudice to their sect which made of him their inveterate, and finally, their most dreaded, foe. From the Belfast magnates,

* He left in May, 1696.

he had perhaps acquired the rooted dislike to provincial society that gives rise to many a sarcastic touch in his journal. From his experience as a parish priest, he learned how ill the clerical life suited him, how hard would be the discipline that could fix him to its routine duties. With some added zest, he renewed his residence with Temple, this time bringing with him the first instalment of the work that was to constitute his earliest title to enduring fame.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST ACTS IN SWIFT'S LITERARY AND POLITICAL CAREER.

1696—1701.

ÆTAT. 28—33.

Swift's third residence at Moor Park—His occupations—Reading—His schemes of advancement—Lord Sunderland's patronage—Resignation of Kilroot—Esther Johnson—The early tie between her and Swift—*The Battle of the Books*—The literary controversy to which it was a contribution—Temple's *Ancient and Modern Learning*—Wotton's reply—Boyle and Bentley—Swift's place in the fray—The intention of the *Battle of the Books*—Swift learning his own powers—The death of Sir William Temple—A last effort for patronage—Enters the service of Lord Berkeley—His disappointments in Ireland—Residence at Dublin Castle—Early efforts in humour—Advancement in the Church—The last of Varina—The marriage of Swift's sister—Swift's return to London—The occasion of his first political essay—*Dissensions at Athens and Rome*—The reception, by the Whigs, of Swift's pamphlet—Acknowledged Authorship—Another interview with the king—The strengthening of the tie to Stella.

Swift now came back to England flushed with that new desire for active life that followed as a reaction from the hopeless dulness of Kilroot. He came to settle at Moor Park, no longer as a servant, or even as a paid companion, raised, as caprice directed, into unwonted favour and prominence, or again disturbed by cold and distant looks, the memory of which lived long with him: but as the friend and intimate, who might render services of great value to his patron, but who had the advantage of his own house and income to retire to, if that patron's treatment should again become irksome. Retirement had taught him not only his powers, but also the sort of life for which he was most fit. Henceforth there is a new decision about his actions: whatever errors he commits

are due to the prejudices or the faults of manhood, not to the doubts, the irresolution, and the immaturity of youth.

But Swift brought with him from his retirement more than a formed character, and a matured experience. He had now not only conceived, but in great part had executed, the *Tale of a Tub*.* His poetical essays had received a bitter rebuff: but the writer of the *Tale* required no critic to assure him that there was a line of authorship which he could make all his own.

While this new phase of his career was opening and while his book was lying beside him, and gradually taking its final shape, Swift was going through a wide range of reading.† Its

* Deane Swift's story that Waring had seen the *Tale*, must refer, not to the college days, to which Deane Swift assigns it, but to the days at Belfast. This is confirmed by Swift's own story in the preface, as to the date when it was written, which he had no reason to misrepresent.

† According to a memorandum of his own, entered by Dr. Lyons amongst his MS. notes on Hawkesworth's Life, his reading at this time was as follows:—

From January 7, 169⅞.

Lord Herbert's Harry VIII., fol.
Sleidan's Comment., abstracted, fol.
Council of Trent, abstracted, fol.
Virgil, bis.
Horace, 9 vols.
Sir William Temple's Memoirs.
——————— Introduction.
Camden's Elizabeth.
Prince Arthur.
Histoire de Chypre.
Voyage de Syam.
Voiture.
Memoirs de Maurier.
Lucius Florus, ter.
Collier's Essays, 2 vols.
Count Gabalis.
Sir John Davies, Of the Soul.
Conformité de Religion, &c.
Dialogues des Morts, 2 vols.
Lucretius, ter.
Histoire de M. Constance.
Histoire d'Æthiopie.
Histoire de Côtes, &c.
Diodorus Siculus, abstr. fol.
Cyprian and Irenæus, abstr. fol.
Voyage de Maroc, &c.
Ælian, 1st vol.
Homer, Iliad and Odyss.
Cicero's Epistles.
Bernier's Grand Mogul, 2 vols.
Burnet's Hist. of Reform., fol.
Petronius Arbiter.
Œuvres Melées, 5 vols.

From January 7, 169⅞.

Thucydides, by Hobbes, fol. abs.
Vossius de Sibyllinis.
Theophrasti Characteres.

Sleidan's book is his Commentary on the Reformation: that which follows it, is no doubt Paolo Sarpi's History (the translation of which was John-

details indicate a reader voracious, rather than systematic. There are six or seven volumes dealing with events of late political or ecclesiastical history: two of the early fathers, and a crowd of travels of the order popular in Swift's day, and of romances of the type of "Prince Arthur." Of the few English authors whom he has noted in his memorandum, only one is a

son's earliest literary scheme). The Memoirs, by Maurier, are those of the Princes of Orange, written by Aubery de Maurier in 1682, and translated into English by Thomas Brown in 1692. Sir John Davies's poem, *Nosce-teipsum*, or The Immortality of the Soul, was what gained him the patronage of James I., and possibly the fact that he was connected with Ireland as attorney-general, in James's reign, may have given Swift an interest in a book whose graceful conceits would seem otherwise little to his taste. The Count of Gabalis, written in French by the Abbé de Montfauçon de Villars, and translated into English in 1692, was the book on the Rosicrucian Mysteries, which suggested to Pope the machinery of the Rape of the Lock. From Irenæus, Swift took the cabalistic motto prefixed to the *Tale of a Tub*. Bernier was a French doctor who had spent some time in the Court of Aurengzebe, and who wrote an account of India, which not only gives a graphic picture of what he saw himself, but also an epitome of the Indian dynasties and their history. Where the possible models are so numerous, it would be rash to attempt to define the sources of Swift's descriptions: but it may be that some of Bernier's accounts of battles that he saw with his own eyes, may have helped Swift in the imagery of the *Battle of the Books*. Vossius de Sibyllinis is the volume by the younger (Isaac) Vossius, who had died Canon of Windsor, not many years before. It is an erudite discussion on the origin of the pseudo-Sibylline prophecies, which claimed to be those of the old Cumæan Sibyl, but which Vossius holds to have been forged by Jews, in order to enhance the importance of their nation, by those expectations of a Saviour of humanity, which are reproduced by Virgil in the 4th eclogue. I can trace nothing in Vossius's book likely to have suggested any feature in the *Tale of a Tub*: and Swift can have had no reason for reading it, save interest in the historical episode of which it treats. It is easy to guess the interest that Theophrastus would have for Swift: but it seems strange that, if the obscurity of the Greek was there no hindrance to Swift, and if he was industrious enough to make an abstract of the bulky historic library of Diodorus, from the original, he should have been content to take Thucydides only through the medium of Hobbes. Ælian and Diodorus indeed, as well as Florus and Petronius Arbiter, might have been read by Swift only to gather from them a store of anecdote and illustration: but that the Epitome of Florus was actually read thrice, would seem to show that, in reading these authors, he was completing, in this year, a previous course of Roman history founded on the worthier authority of Livy and Tacitus, with whom he might wish to compare their more feeble fellow-historians.

poet, and he almost the last we might have fancied likely to suit the taste of Swift. Of the leading classical authors, on the other hand, every one is a poet, except Thucydides, who is read only in Hobbes' translation, and Cicero, who is read only in his epistles. Lucretius he had read three times. Swift could condone scepticism, when it was two thousand years old, and when it attacked no systems that he himself cherished. Whatever his views of epicurean philosophy, the cynical melancholy of Lucretius, could not fail to touch a chord of sympathy in Swift.

According to the story of Deane Swift, whose authority may very probably be some reminiscence of Swift's own old age, he was reading at this period about sixteen hours a day. In the midst of this reading, he took that regular and violent exercise which almost to the end of his life he found to be an absolute necessity: exercise of that fierce and excited kind which rather served as an escape from too violent emotions than as an aid to his physical health. At Moor Park, as, curiously enough, at many another spot where Swift lived, tradition names a small hill close to the house, up and down which Swift is said to have run, when the strain of mental excitement made a break of a few minutes necessary.

Swift had returned to Moor Park in May, 1696. In the studies just described he soon forgot the passion for Varina (as his letter had termed Miss Waring), and passed to far other interests than those that had possessed him in the midst of the alien surroundings of Kilroot. He was now the guest of his former patron, treated with consideration that contrasted with his old position: and one short letter written in 1696 helps to give us an idea of his new footing. The address is wanting, but it has been presumed to have been written to his sister or to Esther Johnson.* "I desire your absence heartily,"

* Or, as Mr. Forster with good reason thought, to Stella's mother, Mrs. Bridget Johnson, who afterwards became Mrs. Mose, on her marriage to Sir William Temple's steward. Swift's sister, Jane Swift, although she after-

he says, (Esther Johnson and her mother were in London with Sir William Temple and his family,) "for now I live in great state, and the cook comes in to know what I please to have for dinner: I ask very gravely what is in the house, and accordingly give orders for a dish of pigeons, or, &c." "It is a vast condescension," he says jocularly, that those at Moor Park should "be remembered at all by you in your greatness."

His direct and personal interest in politics now became stronger, even while his literary schemes were widening; and during the year and a half when he was administering his charge at Kilroot through a substitute, he became more and more drawn into the struggles of the time. At length in the autumn of 1697, he determined to resign the post to which he no longer felt inclined to return, and to throw himself into a new field of activity. The country was on the eve of an election, and debates ran high on the question of keeping up a standing army. Robert Harley, Swift's friend of later years, had just carried a resolution, far from palatable to the king, for the material reduction of the forces. Lord Sunderland, feared by some as the adviser of an enlarged army, feared by others as one who treacherously advised that enlargement as a means of lessening the popularity of the Protestant succession, was then Lord Chamberlain: and much as his tricks and turnings had alienated others, he still appeared to possess the confidence of the king. He knew, however, the slackness of his own tenure of power: and perhaps this consciousness prompted some patronage which he now shewed to Swift, who had met him at Moor Park, and whose abilities he may there have discerned. Be that as it may, Swift certainly began the series of his ill-starred political connexions by attaching himself to Sunderland.† Some scheme was on foot: Swift was to

wards had some relations with the Temple family, and died in Mrs. Mose's house, had not at this time any position in the Moor Park family which would make it likely that the letter was addressed to her.

† *Swift to Mr. Winder*, 1st April, 1698. First printed by Mr. Forster.

be employed in some means by which the veteran plotter was hoping to secure and perpetuate his power. In December, 1697, Swift had arranged to resign his living for this new employment: he managed to secure the nomination for his friend Winder: but before December was ended or the resignation was actually completed, Sunderland had been dismissed. "Lord Sunderland fell," says Swift three months later, "and I fell with him." But his political activity was not checked even by that fall. "Since then," he goes on, "there have been other courses, which if they succeed I shall be proud to own the methods, or if otherwise very much ashamed."* Meanwhile, he assures his successor, Mr. Winder, to whom he writes, that he in no way regrets the decision. He knows how the tongues of gossips will be set in motion by his resignation. He foresees how that gossip will find additional matter for discussion in the supposed desire to rid himself of an entanglement with the once adored Varina. But he is sure of the wisdom of his act, though he has "no way of convincing people in the clouds." He has been assured by one or two anonymous correspondents of the ill designs by which his old friend had supplanted him; but these are matters "too tedious to trouble you or myself with." All he has now to do is to give minute directions as to the packing of his books: to plead for indulgence for the tenants who lately were his, and now are Winder's: and with assurances of his lasting friendship to bid good-bye to Kilroot for ever.†

* In the same letter. This is an early one of the many expressions which Swift turns so as to suggest an interpretation adverse to himself. Its probable meaning is, that though he is sure of the honesty of his means, he will still be ashamed of having tried at all, if these means do not end successfully.

† According to one scandal, long ago so completely disproved (did it not, indeed, disprove itself) as scarcely to need mention, Swift's resignation was due to a charge of rape brought against him. Another very different story represents him as resigning, on an impulse of benevolence, in order to provide for a poorer clergyman. Both the slander and the praise must be rejected. Scott accepts the second story, which the facts now adduced from Swift's own letter disprove: and

But it was not only public and literary occupation that gave, in Swift's eyes, new attractions to residence at Moor Park. The inmates there were the same as before, but his relation to at least one of them had changed. Temple was feebler in health, drawing near to his end, and more dependent on Swift's help. Lady Giffard was still there, and still the chief authority in the house; perhaps increasing in the mind of Swift that antipathy that became afterwards so marked. But there was another whose presence attracted Swift and helped to drive from his heart all thoughts of Varina; one who was gradually asserting over him an influence, perhaps as yet unknown to either, but destined to prove so fateful for the future of both.

Esther Johnson was now, at the period of his renewed residence with Temple, fifteen years of age. When he had begun his former residence she had been a child of scarcely eight years old. Even then her early education had fallen to his charge: and the despised and obscure student had found in his little pupil the one heart in the house at Moor Park that bent entirely to his own. When he returned, the attraction was strengthened. To her, if to none other in the house, this return meant the change from dreary and formal routine to the ever-stirring contact of a mind that even thus early was to her the centre of all intellectual light. To her the genius was clear that had not yet dawned for others. To the insight of her love, the hopes, the fears, the misgivings, that were hidden from others, must, if we are to guess from her later relation to Swift, have been partly, at least, laid bare. For her, if for no other, his presence was the brightest gleam of sunshine. Her sympathies were open to every mood that was his: and it

he attributes it to Swift's "exalted benevolence." The phrase is really not applicable to Swift. He was benevolent: but his benevolence arose often from a whim, or an impulse, often from a sudden constraint of duty, which urged him to counteract a parsimonious inclination by giving. Wayward as it is, there is something attractive about Swift's benevolence: but we cannot call it "exalted."

is in these three years of later residence with Temple that the foundations of that close and yet most mysterious bond which grew up between them, were laid. Irksome as was much about his position in Moor Park, it was the love for Stella that made its memory sweet, that made the galling dependence of its earlier years lose its bitterness in recollection, and that made its associations dear to him in later life. For Swift, during these early years, the young mind looking to his, and his only, for guidance, was enough to make him feel his life not quite lonely, dreary as its course had as yet been; enough to give him a background of restful fidelity, amid the misgivings of early efforts. The feeling was quickly ripening into something more: but we may watch its growth, without assuming it to have been, thus early, what it afterwards became.

Stella was now, as Swift recalled long after when the last chapter of the romance had been closed,* passing from the constant sickliness of childhood into the more robust health of early womanhood. She was looked upon "as one of the most beautiful, graceful, and agreeable young women in London:" but her beauty was not so much that of form and feature, as of striking and attractive piquancy. Her hair was of raven black: her eyes sparkling: and her mien one of thrilling animation. The animation would not be least kindled, the piquancy not least attractive, for him whose coming was like sunlight to the maiden in the dull routine of Moor Park, whose genius was as yet a mine undiscovered by others but her. But the beauty, the sparkling wit, and the liveliness of Esther Johnson, made her position still less that of a menial, and furnished her with opportunities of mixing with the fashionable world. She went with the family on their periodical visits to London. She was known in society. The last description applicable to her is that of the inmate of the servants' hall, scarcely noticed by the master of the house. Nothing but love of striking effect could have suggested to Macaulay that the bond between Swift

* "On the death of Mistress Johnson." See Appendix, No. XI.

and her was that of the needy curate finding his advantage in courting the waiting maid, because no other ambition could be his. Neither Swift nor Stella as yet, consciously, thought of love making: but if they had, the courtship would have been addressed by a man of so far assured position, to a maiden whose choice of suitors might have been large enough.

While the inner romance of Swift's life was thus gradually taking shape, amidst his reading, his schemes of political advancement, and his revision of the *Tale of a Tub*, another work came to occupy some of this year 1697. The earliest of his more notable books was now launched upon the limited circle for whom alone it was at first intended, although not printed for some years; and it is to this part of Swift's life that the consideration of the *Battle of the Books* belongs. It was written to defend the position in which Swift's patron had been placed in a fashionable but evanescent literary controversy, suggested by the example of contemporary French literature, and fomented in England by angry personal disputes.

Amongst the various theories bred by the complacent humour of France under the Grand Monarch, there was one which claimed superiority for the products of that age and nation over all that had preceded. A few foreigners might indeed be permitted to share in the superiority: but only so far as they had approached the models of propriety which the Academy of France produced. For the rest, the great names of the remote past enjoyed, it was affirmed, a reputation which was the effect only of the glamour of antiquity, and of the blindness of monkish pedants. It was their privilege to have contributed, possibly, some stones which went to raise the proud monument of French taste and genius: but their claim to equality, much more that to superiority, was based only on a degrading superstition. The paradox was one very likely to be advanced in an age so complacent as that of Louis XIV.: but much more certain was it to be quickly shattered in an age which recognised so well what it owed to antiquity, and

whose literary chiefs, if somewhat stiff and exacting in their canons, were yet secure enough in the permanence and catholicity of their genius, not to be blind to the inimitable grace of earlier models. The paradox had been broached by Fontenelle: and was repeated by Perrault in a poem read before the Academy in 1687, with the title of *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand.* It was not long before the author of the paradox had to regret its enunciation. The struggle became a fierce one; and Perrault found himself overwhelmed with ridicule. Hardest of all, those whom he had praised too lavishly resented eulogies paid at the expense of those whom their literary genius taught them to recognise as masters. Boileau laughed to scorn the criticism which placed him above Horace. The struggle was so one-sided that the rash adherents of the moderns were obliged to make their surrender.

Such was the position of the controversy when Temple, whose interest in French literature was large, introduced the topic to English readers. In a treatise on Ancient and Modern Learning, written in his most chaste and dignified prose, he supported the cause of the Ancients. Avowedly the essay is rather literary than critical: and here and there remarks are introduced which give a graceful turn to the paragraphs, but could hardly be gravely employed as arguments in the controversy. Legendary resources are drawn upon so as to embellish with something of biographical detail what are little more than names in ancient literature. In many passages Temple has doubtless laid himself open to the ridicule which has been thrown upon him with much skill, but little measure, by Lord Macaulay. But the intention of the essay has been purposely distorted by Macaulay. Appeals made by Temple to the general impressions which are to be drawn from classical legends or literature, are twisted by Macaulay into positive assertions falsely claiming historical basis. Temple does not for instance seek to prove, as Macaulay pretends, the excellence of ancient music by saying that Orpheus made trees dance with his lute,

or that Arion escaped drowning by charming the dolphins: but only seems to hint, harmlessly enough, that these legends prove the power of music to have been not unknown or unappreciated by the ancients. He does not lament, as Macaulay avers, the loss of conjuring; but regrets that superstitious fancies now supply the place of that deftness and skill by which he supposes the ancients to have attained the same ends. The treatise is of little value save for its gracefulness of language and tone, but it served very well to give to English readers an introduction to a topic in the literature of their more polite and facile neighbours. What it wants in criticism, it here and there supplies by a humour which Macaulay leaves out of sight. An eloquent passage on the shortcomings and the miseries and weaknesses of humanity, is closed by the remark, which gives the reader a glimpse of something wider than literary criticism, that, "God be thanked, man has this one felicity to comfort and support him, that, in all ages, in all things, every man is always in the right." He gives, in a manner not unlike that of Swift, a description of pedantry as an epidemic that attacks the weaker members of the commonwealth of learning first: that spreads by degrees to the vigorous and strong: and lastly, makes all the neighbours shun the place as tainted with the plague. "This dislike or apprehension turned, like all fear, to hatred, and hatred to scorn. The rest of the neighbours began first to rail at pedants, then to ridicule them. The learned began to fear the same fate, and that the pigeons should be taken for daws, because they were all in a flock: and because the poorest and meanest of the company were proud, the best and the richest began to be ashamed."

Thus begun by one whose name, illustrious in politics, brought dignity to the dispute, the controversy became at once much canvassed in England. The first who entered the lists against Temple was William Wotton, then a young man about Swift's own age. His name raises associations sufficiently odd and characteristic not to be passed over without reference.

Born in 1666, he had roused the curiosity and anticipations of all the learned world by the time that he was six years old. His father, the Reverend Henry Wotton, then wrote a pamphlet which he dedicated to Charles II., and in which he cited the testimony of a whole crowd of learned men, who, astonished at the prodigy of infantile learning, hastened to pay their incense at the shrine of one who was to prove that the world was not old or effete, and who was to shine as the miracle of the coming age. The child at six knew Latin, Hebrew and Greek, as familiarly as his mother tongue, and year by year he seemed to add to his marvellous acquisitions. At ten years of age he entered Catherine Hall at Cambridge: at thirteen he had obtained his degree. It is scarcely necessary to say that this miracle of memory had few other intellectual gifts: and that after entering the lists against Temple, and striving to maintain them against Swift, he faded into a maturity of eccentric and licentious nonentity. To Temple he had replied in his *Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning*, published in 1694. It was a fair and judicial summary of the chief points in dispute, which dealt with Temple moderately, as his rank and dignity demanded, but decisively, as became the student and the scholar arguing against the diplomatist and man of the world. In the argument he distinctly came off the best of the two.

The struggle was now transplanted to English soil. In France it had been a battle of styles: in England it was something more. Here, an affectation of classical knowledge was modish: the reaction against the eccentricities of the Royal Society was strong. To write graceful Latin verses, to affect a general acquaintance with the classics, was the mark of a cultured gentleman: to be interested in the achievements of the new sciences, to find entertainment in the futilities of the "Men of Gresham," was the mark of a pedant and a dullard. The Christ Church wits chose the former part, and in their ridicule of scientific pedantry they included even Sir Isaac

Newton. Against them they had at once the solid acquirements of rising physicists, and the accurate learning and trenchant style of Bentley. It became a struggle in England, of what always claimed to be, and often was, mother wit, against what was stigmatized, and sometimes justly, as pedantry.

But the dispute now took a new and accidental direction. In a casual paragraph of his Essay, Temple had undertaken to prove the careless paradox that the further back we went the better were the authors. Following the imaginary chronicle that some bookseller's hack might have supplied, he finds the earliest in order of time to have been Phalaris and Æsop, whose names were attached to certain pieces, the spuriousness of which was already a mere commonplace of criticism. Temple, whose opinion on the matter was utterly worthless, set aside the view, already an ordinary one, that these pieces were spurious: and in a literary freak took up the cudgels in their favour, praising especially the so-called Epistles of Phalaris, and finding them "to have more grace, more spirit, more force of wit and genius, than any others I have ever seen, either ancient or modern." Such praise is in itself a proof that the paragraph was little else than thoughtless phrasing: but it was an unlucky slip. It suggested to the fashionable, but unsound scholars of the Christ Church clique, a new edition of these Epistles, which had earned the praise of so polite a disputant as Temple. The editing of the spurious epistles was entrusted to Charles Boyle, afterwards Earl of Orrery, a scion of a house that was in more than one of its branches to have some connexion with Swift. While adopting Temple's suggestion, however, Boyle did not fall into his error as to the genuineness of the Epistles, but expressly sets it aside.* But another circumstance involved him,

* Boyle, in his Latin preface, deals with the different views that had been maintained as to the authorship, and guards himself against attributing the Epistles to Phalaris. If, he admits, certain facts given by Diodorus Siculus are true, "actum est de Phalaridis titulo." He sees the unlikelihood of their having obtained no record in any ancient author, if really written

along with Temple, in an attack from Bentley. In the course of his work, young Boyle borrowed from the Royal Library at St. James's a manuscript of the spurious Letters: but the loan was summarily recalled by Bentley, as librarian, before its collation was complete. The motive was assumed to be jealousy against the Oxford clique: and stung by resentment for it, Boyle referred in his Latin preface to the churlish act of Bentley, as in keeping with his usual courtesy—*pro solitâ humanitate suâ*. Bentley's ire was roused, and it involved both the offending Boyle, and Temple, whose unlucky preference had brought Phalaris on the scene. Wotton was preparing a new edition of his *Reflections*, and now Bentley added to it, as an appendix, a dissertation upon the pretended Epistles, in which Temple and his dignified patronage of the Ancients were made to appear ridiculous enough. The controversy had now passed far away from the lines suggested by Perrault and Fontenelle. It was a controversy no longer about a theory of literary criticism, but between two widely diverse literary cliques. Its object was not to maintain an opinion, but through that opinion to wound an opponent. In France men had taken different views according to the tendency of their tastes: in England they took opposite sides according to the force of their personal animosities.

For Bentley to overturn the absurdity involved in Temple's eulogy was a matter of ease. In the first edition of the Dissertation, he maintained the spuriousness of the Epistles: in the second, two years later, he proves his thesis with greater elaboration. With a scholarship that absolutely dwarfs that of his contemporaries, he throws one argument after another with the lavish extravagance of a man who feels his store inexhaustible. He writes in a spirit of rollicking triumph, and

by one so well known as the tyrant: and he sees the objection to the dialect. Differing again from Temple, he even finds that his author is "interdum frigidior." Bentley showed his scholarship not by the discovery that the Epistles were spurious, but in the arguments and illustrations by which he maintained and proved them to be so.

proves that if the epistles so belauded were true, Phalaris had borrowed money from men who lived 300 years after his death, had destroyed towns that were not founded, and conquered nations that had no names: that he had overturned the chronology of Thucydides and Herodotus and proved their histories mere fables: that he had transposed the events of his own day with those that happened long after he was dead: and finally that he had written in an Attic dialect which no man used during his lifetime, and which bore no resemblance to that which he, a Dorian, could have used. Temple's unguarded eulogy was not only overturned, it was scattered into thin air, by this learned sarcasm.

While the answer to Bentley's first attack was still in preparation by Boyle and his more able friends, and while, at Christ Church, Atterbury and Smalridge were preparing for him that armour in which, as a gift from all the gods,* Boyle arrays himself in the *Battle of the Books* before he goes to attack Bentley, Swift stepped upon the scene. He took the side which, as well by personal connection, as by the tendency of his genius, was his, that of the brilliant coterie of wits, against the reputed pedantry of natural science. Nothing could have been devised for the help of his patron with better skill or with greater tact, than was Swift's contribution to the fray. Temple had begun the controversy with what was little more than a rhetorical prolusion, embellished here and there with a few striking thoughts. But he had been dragged down from this graceful dilettantism, and now found himself in a position galling to his dignity, attacked by a mere scholar on a very definite point of scholarship. He had begun, but wisely forbore to complete, a reply. He could not enter into minute details with his opponent: to do so would have been beneath the calm dignity of official retirement—nay more, Temple probably had the sense to see that it would

* This was the reply, "*Dr. Bentley's Dissertation Examined*," published in 1696.

have been extremely dangerous. But now the dependant, whose talents had only slowly forced themselves on Temple's notice, was to do what neither Temple nor all the phalanx of Christ Church wits could manage. He was to force the controversy off the lines of detail, to bring it back to generals, to draw it into a larger arena of human interest, where his own weapons of finer temper, and his own arm of wider sweep, could tell upon the issue. The contest still raged for a time between champions so acute as Atterbury, and so learned as Bentley. But their contributions are remembered only by name, and are read only by the curious. Swift's one effort remains as the single enduring fragment cast up by this very passing volcano of controversy: and the further progress of that controversy has no place in his biography.

In the reply which Wotton afterwards published, he attempted, amongst other devices for turning the force of Swift's ridicule, to fix upon him the charge of plagiarism. "I have been assured," he said, with the affectation common to weakness, of disdaining personal knowledge, "I have been assured that the Battle in St. James's Library is, *mutatis mutandis*, taken out of a French book, entitled *Combat des Livres*, if I mis-remember not." The charge was repudiated years later by Swift with a warmth of indignation which he rarely expended on any point appertaining to his literary fame;* but it was notwithstanding repeated by Dr. Johnson and others down to Scott, without the precaution of verifying the charge. The real title of the work, to which Scott attaches the name of Coutray, was not *Combat des Livres*, but *Histoire poétique de la guerre nouvellement declarée entre les Anciens et les Modernes*; so that it had not, at least, the merit of suggesting to Swift the name of his book. It was not, as Scott calls it, a poem, as of its twelve books only the first is in verse. It was published in 1688, and the author was François de Callières.

* In the Author's Apology prefixed to the edition of 1710, and written in June, 1709.

The author himself describes it as "a sort of poem in prose of a newly-invented style." * Swift very vigorously protests his absolute ignorance of the book: and while there is no ground for supposing that the disavowal was insincere, yet the trifling points of coincidence are quite sufficient to make it probable that the book had passed under Swift's notice in Temple's house, along with a crowd of forgotten authorities on the current topic of discussion. Some of the incidents must have attached themselves to his memory although the book and its author had passed from his mind. Starting from Perrault's poem, *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand*, which is read before the assembled judges and becomes the subject of dispute, de Callières' book proceeds with the stock machinery of the double peaks of Parnassus, the marshalling of the opposing forces, the watering of steeds at Hippocrene, the intervention of *La Renommée*, much as Swift introduces Fame. The ancients have the greater unanimity as to their commander, which Swift, like their other defenders, claimed for them; and, like de Callières, Swift uses the simile of auxiliary forces for the modern champions of antiquity. But when we have said this we have exhausted all possible points of comparison. The piece was not only unborrowed: it was diametrically opposed to de Callières'

* The accounts of the book which have been accepted and passed current, curiously illustrate the ease with which error is repeated. Wotton began with a wrong title: Johnson repeated the mistake: and Nichols first corrected this. Scott first asserted the author to be Coutray, whose name must have been suggested by some curious freak of memory. From him it has been accepted without dispute: and one writer after another has spoken of this French author with an air of familiarity, without having ascertained whether such a person ever lived. Even Mr. Forster, who prided himself on having a unique copy of the book, also accepted, with implicit faith, the author's name. But the copy in his library at South Kensington gives no such name: and from it we can only trace the author, from a printer's advertisement at the end, as a *Monsieur C****. But *Monsieur C****, is not Coutray, but François de Callières, the diplomatist and Academician; and under his name, the very book which had eluded Mr. Forster's search appears in the British Museum catalogue.

poor contribution to the stock dispute, which begins as it ends, with the commonplaces of critical compromise.* The *Battle of the Books* strikes an entirely different chord. Its object is satire, not criticism. Where it touches on the points in dispute, it is in such broad and far-reaching metaphor as that by which he illustrates the "sweetness and light" of the ancients through the fable of the Spider and the Bee, which has supplied a telling phraseology to a phase of latter-day criticism. Like all the satire that Swift ever wrote, it goes directly to the point, by its personal reference. For Swift the main issue is one between Temple and Bentley, between the Christchurch wits and Wotton, not between the arguments of the critics. His preference for the ancients was thorough and sincere: but it went deeper than literary criticism. He preferred them because of their opposition to all the undiscipline of incompetent assumption, because of their freedom from all that moved his satire in ages nearer to his own. His abhorrence of that self-assertion which piques itself on originality because it knows no rule, lay at the very root of Swift's literary, as it did of his religious and moral, judgment.

But accidental as is Swift's real connexion with the Bentley and Boyle dispute, we cannot pass over the *Battle of the Books* without noticing the period it marks in Swift's literary advance. From this point the Pindarics and their kind were forsworn: and French literature, with which the controversy, probably through Temple's intervention, familiarized him, begins to have still more influence on his style. It would be difficult, indeed, to trace any connection between the fierce and unruly genius of Swift, and the polished propriety of the French model: but in his careful rhymes; in his scrupulous lucidity; in his perfect

* The contempt with which de Callières treats the barbarians of England is amusing. Along with some of the more obscure races, such as the Swedes, they are permitted to use the Latin tongue, as having neither literature nor polite language of their own.

subordination of a subject before he seeks to give it form and expression; in the strict limitation and definiteness of his aim, we have abundant proofs that this influence was not lost upon him. Of the two qualities whose union marks Swift's genius, intensity and lucidity, one at least was largely aided by the models which accident now made the subject of his studies for a time.

Much as there still was within himself to develope gloom, yet in great part, the early burden of dependence, of poverty, of uncertain and misapplied powers, was now removed. It would scarcely be true to say of Swift, now or ever, that he found fully congenial work and threw himself into it with unreserved energies. There was always a cynical doubt about his own achievement, and a critical eye for its weaknesses and its perversity of aim. But the epoch of Pindaric Odes, and of strained addresses to patrons, had now passed away. If he still resented Dryden's sneering judgment, he nevertheless unconsciously acted upon the truth that it contained. The almost passionate eagerness to find an utterance for his own strained feelings, all unmastered and unmeasured as they were, which had appeared so strongly in his early work: the overwrought metaphysical jargon which had expressed the turbulence of a mind not yet in possession of a meet organ of utterance: the following of false and unfit literary models—all these were now over for Swift. He had found at once the measure of men, and had acquired a consummate mastery over language. The time was coming when he was to postpone all other passions to that overmastering one of hatred and contempt, which, grievous as it might be to others, rent his own heart most of all. His poetry now acquired its new character. It was to be simply attired, to carry only the polished shaft of sarcasm or the deadly thrust of cynical irony, varied occasionally by trifles deftly handled. His power was to be shown there by the skill and lucidity of the expression: by the easy and contemptuous range, by the rigorous insight, by the

concentrated strength and keenness of passion, but not by any pathetic appeals to the feelings.

But the quiet life at Moor Park, during which Swift's genius was growing and broadening amidst fairly healthful and peaceful surroundings, was now nearing its end. It was on the 27th of January, $16\frac{9}{9}\frac{9}{8}$, that Temple died: and the home at Moor Park was broken up.

For six months before, we are told,* Swift had kept, partly, it would seem, in French, a journal of Temple's illness, which, for some years, remained in his handwriting, with the title "*Journal d'Estat de Mr. Temple devant sa mort.*" The last entry in that journal ran thus: "He died at one o'clock this morning, the 27th of January, $16\frac{9}{9}\frac{9}{8}$, and with him all that was good and amiable among men." There was no insincerity in the words. Their relations had not always been cordial: but it may well be that the earlier irksomeness of dependence, the complacency which had been often captious, and the abundant vanity of his patron, were wiped out, when the grave closed over him, by the memory of the duties and enjoyments of these later years. It was at Moor Park that the one chief affection of Swift's life, the love that clung to him till death, had begun to take shape. It was there he had first found ease; and there that after various trials he had at last found fit expression for the stern and devouring genius that must have an outlet or destroy its possessor.

To Swift, the will of Temple left little beyond† the doubtful privilege of editing his works. The provision was small and the duty was specially irksome. For some years Temple had been arranging, pruning, and correcting his works, as if they were monuments which posterity would never suffer to die. In this labour Swift had been associated, and perhaps had learned thereby that, however respectable as a diplomatist,

* Lyon's manuscript notes in Hawkesworth's Life.

† One version of the autobiography says the amount of his legacy was £100; but the figure is afterwards scored through.

Temple was not likely to be immortal as a writer. For our own day, Temple's works have an interest, if only for the chaste quaintness of their style, and for the picture of a cultured gentleman of the period which they give. Here and there they have even a deeper interest as showing the view of Temple on important questions of policy: but however much these qualities may attract a student of the political ideas of the time, they are not sufficient to obtain a permanent fame. The works, however, which were issued in five volumes, at intervals of some years, seem to have been well received. The whole profit derived from the five volumes by Swift is reckoned by Mr. Forster at about six hundred pounds of present value.* If this was so it was more than Swift obtained for all his own works, scarcely one of which ever brought a profit to the author. But the editing of Temple's works lasted for nearly ten years. There were Memoirs, and Essays, and Miscellanies, and Letters, to be collated, and arranged, and brought out in separate, and fitly timed volumes. Finally Swift's duties as editor brought him into violent and public collision with Lady Giffard, who assumed the part of defender of her brother's reputation against the neglect of Swift.

The death of his patron left Swift to make his way in the world absolutely alone.† At first he had some hopes from the promises of the king: but these hopes were doomed to disappointment. Swift entrusted his application to the care of one from whom many had suffered as Swift did,—to the Earl of Romney. With a right to notice as the brother of Algernon Sidney, Edward Sidney had been taken into the

* The calculation of Mr. Forster is, however, of doubtful accuracy. He supposes the profit to have been £40 a volume. But the only authority for this is the following memorandum, printed by Nichols from the original:

"*April* 14, 1709.—Then received of Mr. Benjamin Tooke the sum of forty pounds sterling, in full for the original copy of the third part of Sir William Temple's Memoirs. I say, received by me. Jon. Swift."

† It was at this period that the following memorandum of resolutions, which fell into Mrs. Whiteway's hands on Swift's death, was written. It is

employment of the Prince of Orange, and by his tact and skill, if not by his abilities, had made himself one of the main movers in the Revolution. But his chances were lost, and he was now a broken-down and purposeless profligate, who for years had never spent a sober day. Such was the man in whom Swift placed trust, and whose betrayal of that trust he never forgave. In the autobiography Romney is described as a "vicious, illiterate old rake:" and in the notes by Swift on Macky's Remarks,* which chance has preserved, he is denied even honour and honesty; "he has not," says Swift, "a wheel to turn a mouse." The disappointment embittered Swift: the meddlesome officiousness, and the superficial courtliness, of the drunken favourite, exasperated him still more. He had

interesting as showing how the self-discipline which Swift was now attempting, descended sometimes even to trifles in its self-analysis. The reader must interpret the memorandum in his own way.

WHEN I COME TO BE OLD. 1699.

Not to marry a young woman.

Not to keep young company, unless they really desire it.

Not to be peevish, or morose, or suspicious.

Not to scorn present ways, or wits, or fashions, or men, or war, &c.

Not to be fond of children, *or let them come near me hardly.*[1]

Not to tell the same story over and over to the same people.

Not to be covetous.

Not to neglect decency or cleanliness, for fear of falling into nastiness.

Not to be over severe with young people, but give allowance for their youthful follies and weaknesses.

Not to be influenced by, or give ear to, knavish tattling servants, or others.

Not to be too free of advice, nor trouble any but those that desire it.

To conjure (altered to 'desire') some good friends to inform me which of these resolutions I break or neglect, and wherein; and reform accordingly.

Not to talk much, nor of myself.

Not to boast of my former beauty, or strength, or favour with ladies, &c.

Not to hearken to flatteries, nor conceive I can be beloved by a young woman; *et eos qui hæreditatem captant odisse ac vitare.*

Not to be positive or opinionative.

Not to set up for observing all these rules, for fear I should observe none.

[1] The words "or let them come near me hardly" are erased, but they can easily be deciphered. Mr. Forster has given a facsimile of Swift's manuscript.

* The *Remarks on the Characters at the Court of Queen Anne*, published under the name of Macky, of whom we shall hear again in the days of Swift's political importance, were written by Davis, an officer in the Customs. Swift made some written notes on the volume, and these have been preserved.

nothing for it but to return to the country which he least wished ever to see again: and on the eve of his departure he prepared the first volume of Temple's Remains with a dedication to the King. But the reminder, when published in 1700, was in vain; and Swift had already returned to Ireland, the harbour to which so often and yet so unwillingly he was to come back in his greatest straits.

Swift went to Ireland in the summer of 1699, finding no better opening than that which now offered itself, to go as chaplain and secretary to Lord Berkeley, who, with Lord Galway and the Duke of Bolton, had been appointed one of the Lord-Justices.

At first all went smoothly. Swift accepted the post of chaplain, because that of secretary was joined to it: and the secretary dispensed favours and patronage. During the progress from Waterford to Dublin, Swift acted in that capacity, but when he got to Dublin, he found himself undermined. A man of the name of Bush had persuaded Lord Berkeley that a chaplain ought not to be secretary, and Swift was set aside. Berkeley made what amends he could. "He had felt himself bound to yield to the representations: but church preferment would fall in soon, and Swift would have his choice." Swift was to learn, however, not for the first or last time, to put no trust in princes. The Deanery of Derry, one of the wealthiest in Ireland, did fall vacant. But Swift found another preferred on the ground of his own age being insufficient. Dr. Theophilus Bolton,* whom years after he speaks of in altogether new circumstances, as "born to be his tormentor," was appointed, and Swift was insulted when he remonstrated, by a suggestion that if he would stoop to simony and pay Bush a

* Dr. Bolton was afterwards Chancellor of St. Patrick's. He ultimately became Archbishop of Cashel; and the story of the dignitary who faithfully promised Swift before each prospective step that he would exchange his time-serving for patriotism when the full measure of his ambition was satisfied, has sometimes been referred to him.

thousand guineas, the preferment might still be his. He turned upon the underling Bush in an outburst of anger: cursed both patron and agent for a couple of scoundrels,* and turned to his own weapons of revenge. Lord Berkeley was satirized in a few stinging verses, where he and Bush were coupled together as "two whispering kings of Brentford." The chaplain had weapons in his hands that made him formidable, and so before six months were over, Swift had received, in February, $\frac{1700}{1699}$, the livings of Laracor, Agher, and Rathbeggan in Meath, worth in all a little over £200 a year. † He did not yet enter on possession; but his anger being somewhat appeased, he continued to live in the castle, where, if we believe the story of Deane Swift, he once had a narrow escape from burning himself and the household, by reading in bed, and letting the candle set the bed clothes on fire, an accident which he had to keep from the knowledge of his hosts by disbursing some guineas of hush money. For the first time during this year of residence at the Castle, the brighter side of Swift's humour shone out at its best. All galling restraints were now left behind him. In playful verse, the manners of the housekeeper's room were painted in "*Mrs. Francis Harris's Petition on the loss of her Purse.*" The observation that has caught the slighter traits which make the picture so real, is the same which, with added bitterness, gave us long after the *Directions to Servants.* No contrast could be greater than that between the strained and stilted style of the Pindarics and the skill with which Swift, by his literary instinct, fastens our interest

* The story depends on the testimony of Sheridan, who must have spoken from distant hearsay. It leaves, therefore, some impression of exaggeration.

† In the Records at Armagh, there is a petition from Swift to the Primate for a dispensation to hold Rathbeggan with Laracor and Agher, on the ground that "the income of the said benefices will be but a comfortable support for your petitioner, and encourage his residence, and due performance of his duty." The petition was referred to the Bishop of Meath on 5th of March, reported on favourably on the 6th, and the faculty granted for a composition of £20 on the 9th.

on a subject trivial in itself. But the right note once struck, Swift preserves it to the end in all his lighter poems. Above the servants' hall, the drawing-room too was depicted: the earl dealing round the cards and overdoing, in his fussy nervousness, the part of a careworn politician: her ladyship holding the stakes, and dropping to sleep over her cards and her snuff: poor Biddy Floyd, the companion, wisely cautious of her pence, and indulging in the mildest gambling with much timidity. "Parson Swift" was the chartered satirist of the company: his ribaldry condoned, perhaps because it could not be resisted. Amongst the ladies of the family his influence was supreme: from poor Lady Berkeley, whose pious love of sermons he deluded with his Meditation on a Broomstick, to Lady Mary and Lady Betty, the latter of whom* was his soundest and most wholesome and straightforward correspondent thirty years further on; and poor little Penelope, who died in the Castle, and whose memory was fresh enough with Swift, more than a generation later, to make him bestir himself to write an epitaph for her tomb in one of the Dublin churches.

Swift's licence of tongue and pen, as yet for the most part jocular, was certainly never resented here. Still living at the Castle, he gained, in the autumn of 1700, a small addition to his income, in the Prebend of Dunlaven, in St. Patrick's, which was given him by Narcissus Marsh, then Archbishop of Dublin. In February, 1701, he took his Doctor's degree in Dublin University. Thus when Lord Berkeley's short period of office came to a close in April, 1701, and when Swift accompanied him back to England, he had secured for himself, not indeed valuable preferment, but yet something which gave at least independence and position. Before he returned, however, he found it needful to put a period to an almost forgotten love-passage. His rising prospects had apparently created a new interest in his former mistress: she wrote to ask about his preferments: probably to expostulate with what seemed to be

* Afterwards Lady Betty Germain of Drayton.

fickleness on his part. In reply he wrote to her, from Dublin Castle, a letter such as few men would have written even if they could: such as scarcely any other could have written, even if they would. It is hopeless for any biographical leniency to defend its tone: it is equally impossible to deny that it is characteristic. But we need not take it as a studied sarcasm, intended to announce to the lady that if she came unvalued, unhonoured, and on sufferance, she might share the lot of Swift. It is simpler, and agrees better with what we know of Swift, to take it as an unsparing and literal version of the relation that he felt must subsist between them. For much he had valued, had respected, had even borne an affection for her; but she had wounded what was most susceptible about him, his intense and self-centred pride. He had striven to break her from her surroundings: she had not yielded to his persuasion. Where he had expostulated she had argued. He had for a time taken her manner "only as a thing put on as necessary before a lover:" but he had at last found it to be based on a severe indifference. The air of opposition which she had assumed would, he knew well, end only in misery to them both: better be quit of the whole affair at once. As to their material prospects, his own experience had been too severe to allow him to gloze over what he knew to be important: he doubts her ability to be a poor man's wife, to check her fancies, to mould herself to his moods, to be content with a quiet life: to find, in short, "the place wherever her husband was thrown, to be more welcome than courts and cities without him." But if she can fairly look all this in the face, and accept the lot he has to offer her, he is content to take her "without regarding whether her person be beautiful, or her fortune large."

Rarely, indeed, has such a letter been written to any woman: never, perhaps, except by Swift, without a refinement of sarcastic insult that would be simply brutal. But with him, it is the natural outcome of a temperament and an intellectual

faculty equally strange. He had at once a singular insight and a singular blindness. He was keen, even to morbidness, in foreseeing and laying bare the motives of action: the same passionate intensity that gave strength to his satire, gave force and clearness to an analysis, pitiless alike to himself and to his mistress. He simply expresses with an unsparing truthfulness, what he believes to be the case between the two: and there he leaves it. On the other hand, he shows here, what he showed throughout, that blindness to the ordinary feelings that stir human nature, which makes him unable beforehand to gauge the effect of his words. Morbid in his analysis of motives, he is equally morbid in his imperviousness to sympathy with feelings. Once stirred he can love deeply, faithfully, permanently: but till the stirring comes, he is dead to the thrills that pass over others. He can lay bare and probe the nerves as they are seen in the dissecting-room: he can feel, too, the living thrill as it passes through himself: but of the feeling that passes in another, and that his own words may stir, he is, not purposely careless, but absolutely unconscious.

The letter written to Miss Waring could have but one result: if she had any spark of pride its insults would repel her: if all pride was so wanting, as to make her stoop to its terms, she would still have been terrified by the prospect it opened to her.

The chapter in Swift's life, thus closed, was not without its future effect. The warnings he gave to the lady he doubtless took also to himself: and they kept fresh in his own mind the danger of an imprudent marriage, from which he had saved himself and her. The folly and the recklessness of such a marriage, with its probabilities of slatternly and degrading dependence, were the more impressed on his mind by the marriage into which his only sister, Jane Swift, now entered. He and she stood alone amongst the kinship, and Swift had suffered dependence too long to let him forget how easily it might again come over them, how readily they might fall into

the degrading position of poor relations. With a nervous dread he foresaw these possible evils, and he had no sympathy with the moral commonplaces by which many men of less real fortitude might comfort themselves for circumstances of inferiority and contempt. His sister married a man named Fenton, a currier in Bride Street. The locality in itself proves him to have been moving in respectable circles in Dublin. He had been a student at Trinity College:* and had then, it would seem, entered upon a well-to-do business already founded. But something in the man himself roused Swift's suspicions. He violently opposed the match, foreseeing from it nothing good: and his fears were realized. His sister was lost to him, and Swift refused to allow himself ever to resume ties which he had once deliberately broken. Her husband died a bankrupt, and left his widow to poverty: and till her death, seven years before Swift's own, she was supported by his bounty. He did not shirk the duty: but, with his usual self-torture, he refused himself the boon of personal affection for the one really close relation that he possessed.

On his return to England with Lord Berkeley, in April, 1701, Swift found awaiting him a scene stirring enough. The year 1700 had been filled with events most critical for the future both of English independence, and of the English Constitution. At its beginning had been arranged the second Treaty of Partition, by which it was hoped some limit might be placed on the encroachments of France. These encroachments were dreaded not by one party only, but by the prudent men of all parties. But stronger even than dread, was the excited virulence of party feeling. In April, a session of almost unexampled bitterness came to a conclusion. The Tory party was in the ascendant: but it was a party swelled by the Jacobite, the political adventurer, and the hireling of France. The zeal of this motley party had been excited by the Report

* For this fact I am indebted to Mr. Carroll, of St. Bride's, Dublin, to whose topographical information I have already expressed my obligation.

of the Commissioners on the forfeited Irish estates. The Report showed that grants, lavish in amount and dangerous in principle, had been granted to William's Dutch favourites. The resumption of these grants was pressed with the most virulent eagerness. From being a party struggle, this soon became a fight between the two Houses: the House of Lords did not reflect the furious Toryism that was now rampant in the Commons, and maintained their own privileges to the very verge of a collision which could have ended only in civil war. The Resumption Bill was carried: William was insulted in the sorest point: and he parted with the Commons in a mood that rendered it only too likely that disputes still more violent would break out during the next winter. During the summer, tensity was added to the already strained public feeling by the death of the young Duke of Gloucester, the only surviving son of the Princess Anne, which brought the crown of England one step nearer to the succession of a foreign line. Whatever prudent men might feel, the prospects of maintaining the Revolution settlement stood very low with the mass of the nation.

William, unwilling as he was to make terms with a party whose ruling passion he knew to be detestation for himself and his rule, was forced to yield to the popular prejudice. Early in spring, Somers, the member of the Whig party whose talents were most commanding and whose character stood highest, had been dismissed from the post of Lord Chancellor. In December, Swift's patron, Lord Berkeley, was superseded, along with his brother Lord-Justices, by the Earl of Rochester, who only waited till he had arranged a Tory ministry before coming over to assume the government of Ireland as Lord Lieutenant in the spring of 1701. During the winter, while the ministry was being recast, the popular feeling had not become more moderate: and in February, $170\frac{1}{0}$, an election had resulted in a new parliament more distinctively Tory than ever. Robert Harley, the chief of that party, was elected Speaker:

and it is a curious point in Swift's biography that the political events in opposition to which he made his first important appearance as an author, were directed by one who afterwards became his chief patron, and who commanded his most devoted attachment.

The new parliament, even before Swift accompanied Lord Berkeley back to England in April, 1701, had entered with full vigour on its work of vengeance. Not content with the resumption of the Irish estates, with the dismissal of Somers, with the reconstitution of the ministry, and the reduction of the army, the Tory party were still pressing for more. The Partition Treaty was unpopular: no scandal was uttered about the late ministers, that was not readily caught up: and it was resolved to proceed by way of impeachment against Lord Somers, William's wisest adviser, against the Earl of Portland, his oldest and most trusted friend, against the Earl of Orford, the most stubborn and unmanageable of Whigs: and against the newly created Lord Halifax, who as Charles Montagu, had been the literary friend and coadjutor of Matthew Prior, and who now, as a peer, was the rising hope of the Whig party. The House of Lords resented the impeachments: the struggle between the Houses broke out again: each strained its privileges to the utmost: and a new collision was prevented only by a sudden prorogation, which left the two parties ready, as soon as the occasion offered, to spring at one another's throats. Such was the state of matters which led to Swift's first political tract, *On the Dissensions at Athens and Rome*, which stands alone as marking his formal connexion with the Whigs.

Already, in Ireland, Swift had talked with Lord Berkeley of the violent outburst of party rage, which had shown itself across the channel. It was at Berkeley's suggestion that he undertook the pamphlet, the main object of which is to draw a lesson for his own day from the violent outbursts by which Athens and Rome made shipwreck of their liberties. He

came over in April, with the plan of the pamphlet in his head: stayed, as usual, with his mother at Leicester, on his way to London: and remained in London from May till September, leaving just after he had launched this first venture, anonymously, on the world.

The pamphlet, interesting though it is, as Swift's first political work, need not delay us long. The circumstances under which it was written, as well as the associations of the writer, mark it for an effort on the Whig side. The personal allusions convey, under a very transparent veil, references to the peers who were attacked by the Commons' impeachments. They are pictured under prominent names in Athenian history, of men who fell victims to popular rage, and the ill-usage of whom recoiled upon the heads of those who wrought it. The tract was a blow struck for Somers and his companions; as such it was intended by Swift, and as such it was received by them. But, though written on the Whig side, it fixed him to no distinctively Whiggish principles. Of opinions on Church affairs it contains absolutely nothing; and yet his opinions on Church affairs eventually fixed, far more than anything else, Swift's place in politics. What the author of the tract dreads most, is what he calls *dominatio plebis*. Of possible evils what he dreads least, is the tyranny of one. What he maintains to be most necessary to safe government, is a balance between the different parts of the nation: and this theory of political balance all political parties and most political writers in that day advocated. On one point he is perfectly distinct, and absolutely consistent with the opinions which he expressed from the beginning to the end of his career. He winds up his argument by a protest against party government: and that protest was one he never missed an opportunity of making, as long as he lived.

"Because Clodius and Curio happen to agree with me in a few singular notions, must I therefore blindly follow them in all? * * * Is it not possible that upon some occasion Clodius may be bold and insolent, borne

away by his passion, malicious and revengeful? That Curio may be corrupt, and expose to sale his tongue and his pen? I conceive it far below the dignity of human nature and human reason, to be engaged in any party, the most plausible soever, upon such servile conditions."

Careful as the pamphlet is, it wants, in all but one or two isolated passages, the force and the humour which reconcile us in almost every other controversial writing that Swift has left, to the dry bones of a forgotten dispute. It is the work of a hand new to that art in which he was eventually to distance all competitors. The elaborate theorising with which the pamphlet begins, is strangely unlike Swift: and the classical parallels are paraded with something of pedantry. But the current taste of the day has to be considered. Abstract political theories were so popular that less than a dozen years before, the Convention Parliament had consummated a Revolution by voting that the Original Contract, a figment of which it pleased political theorists to talk much, had been violated. Fanciful as Swift's classical parallels appear, we must remember also that classical allusions were much prized by the literary cliques of the day, and that these literary cliques had a good deal to do with moulding political controversy. But from whatever cause, the tract produced a strong and immediate effect. Its coolness and calmness of tone came in striking contrast to the excitement of the party struggle. The disguised allusions, and the far-off parallels, allowed all the more freedom of treatment; yet the turns of expression were not lost, nor was it hard for contemporaries to apply them to current affairs. The pamphlet was much handed about. Men so prominent as Somers, and Burnet—Swift's inveterate foe of later days,—were spoken of as its authors. Its claim to popularity was enhanced by events. On the 17th of September, when Swift had gone back to Ireland, the whole political atmosphere changed. On that day James II. died at St. Germain: and Louis XIV. was infatuated enough to rouse the people of England into a frenzy of excitement by recog-

nising the Pretender. Instead of being in hazard of his throne, William found himself again received as the one possible Saviour of the nation. From being a triumphant and patriotic party, the Tories found themselves a discredited faction, tainted with treason. It was to this that their "Dissensions" had led: so nearly had our Athens come to be the slave of a modern Xerxes. Swift found himself in the pleasantest of all positions, that of a successful prophet. A month more made the same views triumphant at the polling booths in November, 1701.

The story of the authorship soon crept out. According to one, and that apparently Swift's own, account, the avowal took place in Ireland. In a company where Swift was present, Bishop Sheridan of Kilmore,* the only non-juring bishop whom Ireland produced, was ascribing the pamphlet, according to current report, to the Bishop of Sarum. It is scarcely likely that under such a name, it could have proved very palatable to Dr. Sheridan: but the reference was at least sufficiently respectful to tempt Swift first to doubt Burnet's authorship, and finally when challenged as "a positive young man" for his doubts, to announce his own responsibility for the paper. The avowal of authorship, however made, procured for Swift the countenance and friendship of Somers, of Burnet, and of other leaders of the Whigs.† As for his own opinions, it was now, he says,‡ that for the first time he began

* The degree of relationship between this bishop and Swift's later friend, the father of his biographer, and the grandfather of the more famous dramatist, is uncertain. The Bishop was the son of the Sheridan of Kilmore, who was a converted Roman Catholic priest, and in whose house Bishop Bedell died in 1641.

† "My Lords Somers and Halifax, as well as the bishop (of Salisbury), desired my acquaintance with great marks of esteem and professions of kindness * * * They were very liberal in promising me the greatest preferments I could hope for, if ever it came in their power * * I grew domestic with Lord Halifax, and was as often with Lord Somers as the formality of his nature (the only unconversable fault he had) made it agreeable to me." *Memoirs Relating to the Change in the Queen's Ministry in* 1710.

‡ *Memoirs Relating to the Change in the Queen's Ministry.*

to trouble himself with Whig or Tory; and if he professed his adherence to the former, it was with much misgiving as to their views in regard to the Church.

But the visit to England from April to September in 1701, was eventful to Swift for other reasons than the appearance of this tract. During that visit, he completed a further instalment of his task in editing Sir William Temple's Remains: and, perhaps through the occasion which their appearance offered, he had a new interview with William III. The king was now fast failing in health, and nearing the end of that tangled task which had been his in English politics. With Swift, whose presence was associated with the wise advice of Temple, William seems to have taken counsel in the midst of that rancorous faction which assailed him, and the real bearings of which he was never able to fathom. Swift could only comfort him by showing that politics in Ireland were of a milder description: "When I was last in England," he says, "I told the king that the highest Tories we had with us in Ireland, would make tolerable Whigs in England."* The reason was not far to seek: in Ireland the memory of Tyrconnel and his wild Irishmen was in 1701 too recent to allow of any tampering with principles that might end in Jacobitism.

But the same visit of 1701 was marked by another event of still closer biographical interest. Since the death of Temple, Esther Johnson had lingered with her mother and sister at Farnham, where the household at Moor Park and its offshoots were under the somewhat Draconian dominion of Lady Giffard. Stella had been left a small legacy by Temple: and part at least of that legacy consisted of a farm in Ireland. Her fortune was not more than about £1500: and to live with independence on such resources it was needful to seek for the best interest for her money, as well as the cheapest place of living.

* *Letter Concerning the Sacramental Test.* This was written in 1708: and as Swift had then visited England more than once since the king's death, the expression must refer to his last visit during the life of the king.

Ireland seemed to offer what was wanted. It was this that gave some colour and ground for the determination now formed to reside there: but Swift's persuasion, by which it was brought about, clearly rested on grounds that were more decisive of the future lot of both. Swift and Stella had before been drawn to one another by reverence and admiration on one side: on the other by the feeling of protection and guidance, sought and given. Absence had only confirmed the impression: and now Swift gladly seized any excuse to bring Stella near him. He avows that the change, reasonable as it was, "was also very much for my own satisfaction." Swift knew that if he was to keep her all his own, he must place her where he might watch over and protect her. For the future, under whatever painful and mysterious condition, their lots were to be joined. With Stella came Mistress Rebecca Dingley, who had lived with her in England, and who remained with her till Stella's death. She had no real hold on the society which gathered round Stella's home, but was treated nevertheless, both by Swift and others, with a studied civility that helped to avoid any of the scandals which the busy gossips of Dublin would be sure to invent. To check such scandals, the ladies came over before Swift: they settled in Ireland while he still remained in London: and from the first they practised that caution in regard to appearances that would seem overstrained, did we not remember that pride which made Swift resolve to secure both himself and Stella against the slightest breath of scandal.* Such censure as did arise soon wore off, helped in its passage by that ever watchful prudence which, at Swift's suggestion, she was careful to maintain. The relation between the two was from the first, so far as the world was concerned, free from all doubt or ambiguity. Stella shared in all Swift's interests, remained his constant

* We may suppose that it was about this time that Esther Johnson's mother became the wife of Mr. Mose, who had been Temple's steward. The marriage would increase Stella's desire to have a home of her own.

companion, and by degrees became the centre of his circle. But they never met alone: they never lived in the same house: and though all his thoughts and cares were shared by her, the bond was never in reality a closer one. And these strict limits of their friendship were so carefully maintained, that slander never ventured to assert otherwise, except in some vulgar outbursts which forgot even appropriateness of attack. Strange and abnormal as were its conditions, fettered and cramped as it was by Swift's pride and waywardness, or by the mysteries of disease, the romance of that mutual devotion still forms one of the threads of deepest interest running through Swift's dark and sombre life.'

CHAPTER IV.

SWIFT AMID THE PARTY STRUGGLE OF THE FIRST YEARS OF QUEEN ANNE. "THE TALE OF A TUB."

1701—1704.

ÆTAT. 34—37.

Swift's political conduct—His home at Laracor, and its surroundings—The death of William III.—Change in the Ministry—The Tories in power—Disaffection of the extreme Tories—Prospects of the Whigs—Difficulties of Swift's position—Bill against Occasional Conformity—The struggle in Convocation—Extreme Tories further estranged—Rochester dismissed—Ormond's Irish government—The Test Act in Ireland—Ecclesiastical legislation by the Irish Parliament—Bill against Occasional Conformity revived in England—Swift's view of it—His uneasy relations with the Whigs—The extreme Tories part from the Government—*The Tale of a Tub*—Its aim and meaning—The arrangement of the book—Its view of humanity—Comparison with *Hudibras*—The plot of the Tale—Irreverence of its allusions—The meaning of Swift's irreverence—Sources of suggestion for the book—Its reception—Question of authorship—Stella and Dr. William Tisdall.

It is the business of this chapter to trace the growth of Swift's opinions at a very critical period in his career: to follow his movements between England and Ireland during these years when his early fame was establishing itself: to watch how current events were affecting him: and how, step by step, he was being drawn into the vortex of party struggle raging on both sides of the Channel. No accusation has been more pertinaciously brought against Swift than that of political inconsistency, and no higher motive than that of self-interest has been assigned for it. Before we admit the truth of the charge, it is at least fair to inquire what was the course of the party struggle. We may leave the facts to prove his honesty: and

in the present chapter it is the earlier phase of the struggle into which Swift was eventually drawn so deeply, that opens itself to our view.

As a converse to this, we must turn to the quiet life at Laracor. Swift followed Esther Johnson back to Ireland in September, 1701: and now entered on the duties of a charge which was scarcely in itself an inviting one.

The church which formed the centre of his somewhat scattered parish, is about a mile and a half from the town of Trim, in Meath. Then, as now, it was surrounded by the houses of some gentlemen of property: but so slight was the hold of the Church upon the bulk of the population that Swift seldom ministered to a congregation of more than half a score in all; as he says, "most gentle and all simple."* Trim itself, in its Castle, its fifteenth century church, the "Yellow Steeple" of its ruined Abbey, had memorials of its early importance: and now it was the centre of a busy and important Protestant population, situated amidst a surrounding sea of Roman Catholicism.

When Swift came to Laracor it was to find not only a decayed flock, but a ruined parsonage and a dilapidated church.† The aspect of the place remains much as it must have been when, according to the popular tradition, he walked down to his new charge and astonished the curate and his wife by the assumed harshness of his manner, which was presently to change, when he had sufficiently tried the humility of the man, into an easy consideration.‡ Running southwards from Trim,

* See Letter to Archbishop King, 6 Jan., 170$\frac{8}{9}$: and another to Dean Sterne, 17 April, 1710.

† The income he derived from Laracor and the associated charges of Agher, Dunlavan, and Rathbeggan, amounted to about £244 a year. From his account book for 1708, we may gather so much of the particulars of that year's income.

‡ The story may be true or not, and undoubtedly it bears some resemblance to those by which tradition has rather illustrated the impression of Swift's manner than helped us to the facts of his life. Scott accepts it: Mr. Forster doubts its authenticity; and its authority is no better than the gossipy volumes of *Swiftiana* which Wilson compiled about the beginning of this

the road passes through a flat country, until, after a mile and a half, it comes to a slight rising where it crosses the Boyne and reaches the site of Swift's parsonage and of the little church. Of the church as it stood in Swift's time not a vestige remains. But it was thrown down only about a quarter of a century ago, and its entire simplicity is fresh in the memory of many. Through a small vestry on the north side, one passed at once into the pulpit, below which was the reading-desk of Roger, the clerk.* Pulpit and desk stood midway between the east and west ends of the church, and the rude communion-table, of crescent shape, is still shown to visitors at St. Patrick's in Dublin, as "Swift's writing-table." On the other side of the road and at some distance from the church stands a little farm homestead occupying the site of the parsonage that Swift built for himself. Of the house there stands only a considerable fragment of strong masonry, in the shape of a wall built for shelter against the northern winds. Enough remains only to show that Swift built his house of a solidity that might have been expected to prevent for some generations dilapidations such as he had found. Round the house stood the garden (now a potato field) of which Swift was so proud. It now stands on higher ground than the surrounding fields, and it might seem hard to account for the fears that Swift expresses in his Journal to Stella, lest a sudden rising of the river might flood it. But not long ago the present occupant, in digging some depth below the surface, came upon a garden wall, whose foundation was seven or eight feet below the present surface of the ground.

century. The lines which Scott quotes in connexion with his journey to Laracor,—

"Dublin for a city, Dunshaughlin for a plough,
Navan for a market, Arbracken for a cow:
Kells for an old town, Virginia poor,
Cavan for dirt," &c.,—

clearly refer to some journey northwards, and are inapplicable to any route which Swift could possibly have taken to Laracor.

* Of whom Lord Orrery tells the story, (which Scott thinks is more likely to be true of Swift than to have been invented by Orrery,) that when the solitary member of the congregation, he found himself addressed, "Dearly beloved Roger, the Scripture moveth you and me."

This would seem to have been a fruit wall built by Swift to catch the southern sun, and stretching from the gable of his house to the garden hedge.* At the end of the garden one can still trace the carefully built sides of his fishpond, of which he speaks to Stella. In a field just beyond, the willows that he cherished grew till a few years ago, by the bank of the river Knightsbrooke, and almost within a stone's throw of the house. More close to the house and under a tree that almost overhangs the road, there is a well, which the country folk still call by the name of "the Dean's Cellar."

This was now Swift's home in Ireland: and he occupied it during these years more than at any later time. There was a still stronger tie to it. In this neighbourhood Stella had fixed her home. Twice only, once for a few months in 1705, and again in the winter of 1707–8, she returned to England: but came back to end her life in Ireland. When Swift was absent from the vicarage, it was occupied by Stella and her companion, Rebecca Dingley: when he was at home, she retired to the house of Dr. Raymond of Trim, or to a lodging that is still pointed out, with traditionary reverence, if not with accuracy, in that town.

We know nothing of the incidents of Swift's residence at Laracor in 1702, from which he was probably glad to escape to London to reap the growing favour which his pamphlet had procured for him. He returned to England in April, 1702.

There he found a changed atmosphere. The election of November had completely overturned the Tories. But the triumph of the Whigs was a short one. On the 8th of March, the king had died: and his death had been the signal for a revival of Tory hopes under new conditions.

During the three months that followed the king's death, the

* He had a fancy for such walls: and Mrs. Pilkington tells us a story of one he had built in the Deanery garden at St. Patrick's, and of the care he spent to secure the solidity of its construction.

Ministry was reconstituted in a way to correspond with the known feelings of Queen Anne. Lord Godolphin was named Lord Treasurer: and as yet Godolphin was to be classed as a Tory. Lord Nottingham, the solemn adherent of the most sombre of ecclesiastical parties, was made Secretary of State: and the Marquis of Normanby * was now created Duke of Buckingham, and named Lord Privy Seal. The Earl of Pembroke, whose moderation roused the antipathy of no party, and whose character gained him the respect of all, was made Lord President. Sir Simon Harcourt was Attorney-General, and even Jack Howe, the notorious member for Gloucestershire, whose Jacobitism had carried him to the verge of treason, gained a subordinate post. In a Government so constituted there might seem to be almost every element of Toryism represented. But it had one point of contact with the Whigs, opposed to them as in the main it was. To Marlborough, the dominating spirit in the Government, before whom all its other elements bent, the war was more than all other political principles put together: and ere long he was sure to find that he could rely on most support for a war policy from the Whigs.

The fact, then, that his friends the Whigs were for the moment worsted, did not put an end to Swift's hopes. The germ of the Revolution settlement was Whig: and sooner or later the working out of the Revolution must bring the Whigs to power. But other causes came to break the security of his attachment to that party, and with this came the real difficulty of the part he had to play. Strive as he might, it was for Swift impossible to accept his opinions entirely from the current maxims of either party: and there was one point which seemed to show itself in the programme of the Whigs, to which he could not bring himself to bend. As soon as his

* This was John Sheffield, who as Earl of Mulgrave had written the poetical essays on Satire and on Poetry, and whose latitudinarian epitaph in Westminster Abbey is so well known.

suspicions of Whig sincerity to the Church were aroused, his allegiance to the Whig party was gone: and these suspicions were already being stirred. He had hesitated to take orders: but having become a clergyman, he considered himself bound in honour to fight for the privileges of the Church. To these privileges, rightly or wrongly, he attached great value as ensuring the independence, and the calmness of judgment necessary for the dignity of the Church, and as securing her against all appeals to popular prejudice—appeals which, in any sphere, but above all in that of religion, were what Swift's nature most abhorred. He was, indeed, no advocate of priestly assumption. But in all the range of human folly, he most despised and hated the hypocrisy of the fanatic on the one hand, and the complacent sprightliness of the sceptic on the other: and both, he believed, might best be avoided by a strict maintenance of the political charter of the Church. But this was precisely the point where Swift diverged not only from the practical tenets, but from the whole tone of thought, of the Whigs: and it was precisely the point which was most insisted upon by the Whigs, as they gradually recovered power. The steps of the divergence we have now to see.

Swift spent six months in England, and in October, 1702, returned to Ireland, where he remained till November, 1703. During this year the questions between the two parties were rapidly developing. In the autumn of 1702 a new election resulted in a Tory majority. The Ministry found themselves compelled to take up the Bill against Occasional Conformity,* which sought to close to Dissenters that loophole of escape from civil disabilities, afforded to consciences not too sensitive to bow the knee now and then in the Temple of Rimmon. The Bill was pressed forward by a new champion of the Church. This was young Henry St. John, who had suffered in youth

* Occasional Conformity provided a strange salve for tender consciences by allowing Dissenters to qualify for civil posts, by taking the Communion according to the Church of England, on rare or single occasions.

from the burdensome education of a Dissenting home,* and who now avenged himself on the tormentors of his boyhood by giving such time as he could spare from debauchery, to the hunting down of the Dissenters. The Bill was passed with much enthusiasm by the Commons. But in the Lords the support of Marlborough and Godolphin was forced and unwilling, and there the Bill was delayed and finally stopped for the Session.

In another arena, more exclusively ecclesiastical, the same sort of wrangling was going on. The Upper and Lower Houses of Convocation so far corresponded in their shades of political feeling to the secular Houses of Parliament. The bishops appointed since the Revolution were Low Churchmen: the clergy of the Lower House were imbued with the current High Church notions. There was one amongst them who took the lead for virulence, activity, and controversial skill. Francis Atterbury, who became at a later day the friend and intimate of Swift, vastly different as was the range of feeling in the two men, was now rising quickly in popularity. As Preacher at St. Bride's he had acquired the leading place amongst the pulpit orators of the day, and now appeared in Convocation as Archdeacon of Totnes and the leader of the High Churchmen. He was known as the author of a *Vindication of the Rights of Convocation*, of which rights he was afterwards the main champion. With Swift he must already have come into some contact as the chief author of the reply of Boyle to Bentley, one item in the controversy of which the *Battle of the Books* is the most enduring monument. There is no Churchman of the day whose virtues as well as faults stand out in lineaments so clearly marked as those of Atterbury. From his college days we find him restless, ambitious, even turbulent.† When he

* Bolingbroke's complaint of his boyhood's task of reading from Dr. Manton's folio of 119 sermons on the 119th Psalm, is well known.

† "I know not what to think of your uneasiness," says his father to him. "It shews unlike a Christian, and savours neither of temper nor consideration. I am troubled to remember it is habitual. * * You make

makes his way, impatient of college life, to London, it is to appear in all the attractive glitter of a popular preacher, bustling and energetic, vain even in the fashion of his outward man: but nevertheless with a redeeming background of strongly-kindled enthusiasm, that spreads its rays over his whole life. Other scenes will bring him into closer contact with Swift, some of whose opinions he travesties by exaggeration: now we see him only at the outset of a struggle in which, bating his exaggeration, he must have commanded not a little sympathy from Swift.

In Ireland the Ministry equally failed to conciliate either party. Early in 1703, the Duke of Ormond was appointed Lord-Lieutenant in place of Rochester. In September Parliament met, but its session only aggravated party feeling. The Whigs pressed a new Bill for Preventing the Growth of Popery, but the Tories managed to pass it in the form of a Test Act, which bore heavily on the Protestant Dissenters. The session left Tory and Whig, Churchman and Dissenter, more opposed than ever.

When Swift came back to England in November, 1703, the strength of parties was being tested by the renewed effort to push on the Bill against Occasional Conformity, the failure of which in the previous session we have seen. The speech from the throne, in words which conveyed no covert allusion to the Bill, had urged that unanimity might as far as possible be allowed to prevail, in view of the dangers that threatened the kingdom abroad. It was more than guessed that this warning proceeded from the dislike which Marlborough and Godolphin both entertained to the Bill, nominally introduced under their sanction, as likely to promote disunion and so hinder their paramount object. But their influence was not strong enough

your friends and yourself uneasy: cannot trust Providence. Do your duty and serve God in your station." *Lewis Atterbury to his son*, Nov. 1, 1690. The words are strangely prophetic of the bishop's subsequent career of ardent combat, and of baffled conspiracy.

to prevent the Bill being pressed rapidly through the House of Commons. It was sent to the Lords and there fiercely debated. A small majority again threw it out: and by a strange hypocrisy Marlborough and Godolphin joined in the protest against the rejection of a Bill which they heartily disliked, which they voted for only because they saw no means of refusing, and which their colleagues pressed for contrary to their entreaties and advice.

We know what the tendency of Swift's mind was on this subject. His dislike to the Dissenters, as fanatics, was consistent in its intensity throughout his life, though it varied from the bitterness of contempt to that of open hostility. We know from the *Tale of a Tub*, now receiving its latest touches, that the Occasional Conformity of the Dissenters was the object of his contempt and ridicule.* We know that even if he was ready at this time to tolerate the device, it could only be from his opinion that conspicuous hypocrisy weakened the cause of its professors, and that Occasional Conformity would soon make Dissent ridiculous. At a later time his dislike grew so bitter that he would tolerate no half measures, even though they might promise results like these. But at present he is against the Bill for preventing Occasional Conformity. He is disgusted with the whole struggle, which he describes as the "highest and warmest reign of party." He can only turn it to ridicule. The very dogs in the street are more contumelious and quarrelsome than usual: a committee of Whig and Tory cats has been making night hideous on his roof: and the very ladies are so eaten up with their zeal for religion, that they cannot find time to say their prayers.† But he leaves us no room to doubt that his views on it were formed chiefly in the company of Whig politicians. Peterborough, Somers and Burnet are those whom

* In section xi. of the Tale we are told how Jack got upon a great horse and ate custard. The sentence refers to a notable result of occasional conformity, when Sir Humphrey Edwyn, a Presbyterian Lord Mayor, ostentatiously went with his insignia of office to the Conventicle.

† *Swift to Dr. Tisdall*, Dec. 16, 1703.

he quotes, as proving by their support that the Bill was not really for the benefit of the Church. He went so far indeed as to write against the Bill: though in so half-hearted a way that the pamphlet, unlike most of those he wrote, was too late for the purpose it was to serve.*

Swift would not break with the Whigs as yet, but his position was not a comfortable one. His friends the Whigs might have fair prospects, but they were still out in the cold. They were the "best friends in nature." But they wanted, so he tells us, "the little circumstance of power and favour." † The civility of a cast courtier was proverbially cheap. But worse than this, he doubted how far his principles would allow him to follow them. He was uneasy and vexed with himself. The jarrings of party displeased him at any time: but it is clear that in 1704 Swift was equally out of joint in his relations with one party and the other. He had no thought of a sudden change, or indeed as yet of any change at all; but there were plenty of doubts to unsettle his allegiance: and Swift was beginning to feel himself unfit to be a submissive Whig. The ever-recurring suggestion again came back to him; should he go back "to speculation and study," and wait for a change of scene? He was in a position in which any false move, any factious action, any deliberate injury to his Church, by one party, might drive him permanently into the arms of the other.

In May, 1704, after the close of the Session, he left England for the restful scene of Laracor, and for that companionship from which all political thoughts were banished. There he knew he could find interest in all his hopes, and a patience that would wait till his ambition ripened. He went back to Laracor in June, 1704, unsettled, indeed, but still nominally the adherent of a party whose hopes were not high, and of whose tenets he was beginning to have some doubts. So much for the honesty of his political principles thus far.

* *Swift to Dr. Tisdall*, Feb. 3, $170\frac{4}{5}$.

† *Swift to Dr. Tisdall*, Dec. 16, 1703.

Before he left London Swift had taken a step decisive, indeed, for his fame, but which prudence might have told him would endanger his future prospects in the Church. But prudence was a virtue to which Swift had little claim: and even had its warning been stronger it might not have stopped the issue of that which was to be in some respects the most typical product of his genius. The *Tale of a Tub* had been lying by him now for about seven years. It received his final touches, and was this year published, anonymously, along with the *Battle of the Books*, and a shorter *Discourse on the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit*. If the *Battle of the Books* had been transcribed and handed about amongst Temple's friends, its authorship could hardly have been quite unknown: and the joint issue of the two must surely, to a small circle of readers, have suggested Swift as the author of both. From whatever reason, or by whatever means, however, that authorship was, to the public, carefully concealed.

To discover the meaning of the book which has stirred minds so widely diverse as this has, which rests upon foundations so simple and yet so unquestionably broad and strong, and in which each generation has found novelty and variety, we need not judge too minutely the lights and shades of the satire, or ask ourselves how and when this or that touch was added. During these early years we have seen that Swift held on certain leading points opinions different from those with which he is chiefly associated. We may suggest various explanations of these early views: how Swift may have despised the Dissenters too much to notice them: or may have hesitated as to the best policy to be pursued in order to meet them: or may have felt himself bound by party ties to moderation. But in the *Tale of a Tub* we have no mere phase of opinion varying by mood and circumstance: we have the real and permanent thoughts of the man, apart from all the dress of conventional opinion and party bias. No one will pretend to say that the *Tale of a Tub* might not, in all its essential

parts, have been written when Swift was in close alliance with the Tories, just as well as when he was a professed Whig. It is because it expresses with such absolute and even reckless freedom, the whole range of the author's mind, because it plays so easily round all subjects of human interest, that the elasticity of its humour has moved each generation, and retains its hold upon us now with all the freshness and vivacity of youth. It has abundance of faults. It is digressive, and occasionally diffuse: it has many mannerisms, and its humorous dress is of an antiquated, to some, it may seem, even an artificial, fashion. There is no graphic or dramatic interest to sustain the reader. It is often obscure, and some of its effects are due to topics which to us have no more than antiquarian interest. But all these are only new proofs of the central interest of the book. It is not only by its flashes of wit, by its bursts of eloquence, by the steady and relentless beat of its satire, that it is redeemed: but still more by the marvellous strength and grasp with which the whole of human nature is seized, bound to the dissecting table, and made to yield to his pitiless scalpel, the tale of its subterfuges, and pretences, and tricks. Other satires have their special application. Who is it that can limit the range of the satire in the *Tale of a Tub*?

A new epitome of the argument and purpose of the *Tale of a Tub*, forms no fitting] part of a biography of Swift. It is scarcely for a biographer even to indulge in detailed criticism. But what, we may ask, was the aim towards which Swift was then minded that his genius should work? That genius, it must be remembered, was now at its period of greatest buoyancy and lavishness of resource; just as at a later time we find it growing in depth, in concentration, and in keenness of cynical contempt. In what direction then did this abounding overflow of resource expend itself?

There are few books in the language, so short and so current in the mouths of men, the full meaning of which it is harder to

grasp. The common account of the book is that it describes, under the names of three brothers, who interpret variously the terms of their father's will, the three main divisions which have appeared in Christendom, and which separate the Lutheran from the Roman Catholic on the one side, and the Calvinist on the other. As a treatise on Ecclesiastical divisions, it was read in Swift's own day: and as such a treatise it has in great measure been accepted since. If follies and absurdities are exposed, it is, according to this assumption, only in so far as such follies are exemplified in these ecclesiastical disputes.

One simple fact alone disposes of this view of the Tale. Of the whole book (reckoning Dedications, Preface, Introduction, and Digressions—and no one of these can be taken away without marring its completeness) only about one third is even indirectly concerned with these ecclesiastical disputes. How these are treated, we may see presently: but first, what are the broad foundations upon which the superstructure is raised? It is in these that the abiding interest of the book is to be found.

Swift begins with a Dedication, nominally from the Bookseller to Lord Somers. It is clearly written later, possibly five or six years later, than the rest of the work. Somers was the chief ornament of that party to which Swift still adhered: and it is with marvellous skill that a eulogy, sounding so oddly amidst the general sarcasm that pervades the whole, is pronounced without any lapse into flattery. The bookseller dedicates the book to Lord Somers, because it was to be given to the worthiest: and amongst all the learned whom he consulted there was not one who did not, while placing himself at the summit, assign the second place to Lord Somers.* The

* It is perhaps worth comparing this with another dedication, nearer to our own day, which has something of the same sarcasm. The earliest edition of "Vivian Grey" bore the following dedication:—"To the Best and Greatest of Men, I dedicate these volumes. He for whom it is intended, will accept and appreciate the compliment. Those for whom it is not intended will—do the same." "*Detur dignissimo*" is the text of both.

very folly of vanity is made to pay tribute to the worth of Somers: the vein of sarcasm is not once interrupted: and yet in these few words we have a picture of Somers's position amongst his countrymen more vivid than would be given by volumes of elaborate adulation.

But a mere satire on fulsome and mercenary dedications would not be sufficient outlet for Swift's genius. He rises to a new stage in the author's dedication to Prince Posterity. For the first time, here, Swift shows, without any of the consuming passion that gives an angry weight of denunciation to all his later efforts, a power that is peculiarly his own. It is that of covering by dignified and even eloquent argument what we find the moment we get below the surface, to be nothing but arrant inconsistency and nonsense in a solemn dress. No method could work better in sarcasm. But when we ask what is the aim of the satire, it is easier to answer what is struck at than what is not. Is it the fictitious satisfaction which humanity looks for from posthumous fame: or is it the narrowness of eyesight which, content with the verdict of the moment, is blind to the view that posterity will take? Is it the writers of the day who are being laughed at, or is it human nature itself which must revolve in an endless circle, and can never hope to have a means of judging what is worth preserving and what is not? The description of the dire work by which Time so grievously wrongs his ward, Posterity, rises to eloquence in its veiled sarcasm:—

"His inveterate malice is such to the writings of our age, that of several thousands produced yearly from this renowned city, before the next Revolution of the Sun, there is not one to be heard of: Unhappy Infants, many of them barbarously destroyed, *before they have so much as learnt their mother-tongue to beg for Pity.* Some he stifles in their Cradles, others he frights into convulsions, whereof they suddenly die: some he flays alive, others he tears Limb from Limb. Great Numbers are offered to Moloch, and the rest tainted by his breath, die of a languishing Consumption."

Not one word is wasted. The satire never hastens to disclose or pronounce itself: and yet, with marvellous skill, the reader

is never allowed to lose that easy poise of attitude which helps him to feel as if he viewed from a sufficient height the sarcasm that underlies the solemn earnestness.

In the Dedication to Lord Somers, Swift ridicules the mercenary cringing of the day, and in the Dedication to Prince Posterity, its blear-eyed narrowness of view. In the Author's Preface, which comes next, he takes another and a wider sweep. His book is to be a Tale of a Tub,* thrown to the wits to stay their on-coming rush upon the weak sides of Religion and Government, even as sailors throw the barrel to the whale to save the ship. Some day a greater work is to be attempted on a complete scale: and an Academy is to be founded in which room is to be made for all the certified wits, and where they are to indulge their vagaries at peace. Meantime Swift throws his contribution to stop their instant attacks. Here he flings down the glove to the Wits: and it is this challenge, and the merciless rout with which he follows it up, that form the central ideas of the book. He overwhelms with ridicule the Witwoulds and the Petulants of the day. He turns inside out their weak, hothouse, town-bred humour: and with all the pitiless force of his politest and gravest irony he pursues the miserable figment of rancorous satire that each drivelled out against his neighbours. Step by step the satire advances, helped out by occasional glimpses of the lurking smile: and, as he concludes, the assumption of reverence has so grown upon the author that he can only hope some day to produce his labour of years in a *Panegyric on the World*, and a *Modest Defence of the Rabble in All Ages*.

The Introduction is the coping stone to the four opening chapters. It brings into a focus the follies that he has so far satirized, and shows them, as they were actually fermenting in

* Mr. Forster quotes the use of this phrase, by Sir Thomas More, and afterwards by Ben Jonson as the title of a comedy. It is noteworthy that Defoe, writing against the treatment of the Irish Dissenters in this very year, 1704, speaks of the Bill disabling them, as a "Tale of a Tub"—exactly the sense of the words in the title chosen by Swift.

the would-be learned circles round him, in these years from 1697 to 1704. No weapon of sarcasm is neglected, and after the ground has been mapped out, and the general positions assigned, each new illustration, each subordinate metaphor, seems to give some new point to the ridicule.

Men can get over the heads of others only, he says, by three contrivances: the Pulpit, the Gallows-Ladder, and the Stage Itinerant. Those who use these instruments represent, amongst us, first, the Modern Saint, who has all the worm-eaten rottenness, all the inflammable quality, of the wooden Pulpit from which he speaks: next, the lovers of faction and of poetry (strangely grouped together), ascending painfully the ladder of the gallows to descend betimes so fatally: and, lastly, the votaries of Grub Street, whose type is found in the mountebanks of the Stage Itinerant. We of Grub Street —for he reckons himself amongst the number—have not been appreciated by this superficial age. They do not understand our profundities: they do not know the intricacies which must be unravelled before they reach our meaning. We have lost our rightful allies: the scientific virtuosos of Gresham College, and the literary wits of Wills', have opposed us most cruelly with all the rancour that deserters ever show. There is nothing left for us but to catalogue the long list of our treatises: to publish forth the profundity of our learning: to preserve for posterity our just contempt for antiquity: and to add, possibly, another to our profound productions, as the author is about to do.

Satire such as this reaches far beyond the accidents of ecclesiastical controversies, beyond the realm even of literary cliques: it pursues human nature, and routs it out from all its subterfuges and disguises. "What is all this innate desire for notoriety worth?" is the question that it seems to ask. "What is the value of the verdict that assigns that notoriety? By what means is it gained?" "And yet, if we abandon the pursuit, is there anything better we can pursue instead?"

There is no skimming over the surface to catch a transient smile. On the contrary, each metaphor in the satire is followed up with the elaborate care which one of the Royal Society might have shown in explaining to his fellow Greshamites the intricacies of a scientific process. There is nothing for us but the pulpit, the gallows, and the mountebank's stage. So long as we push and jostle one another in order to rise for a moment above the crowd, we must use one of these means. And, translated from metaphor, what are they? If we are not "Modern Saints" or fanatics, "refined from the dross and grossness of sense and human reason;" if we are not mad with party virulence or poetic frenzy, climbing only that we may dangle at a gibbet's end; then it is left us to be the mountebanks of the stage itinerant. There is no escape. Nature has made us all of the company of Grub Street, although the sect of Gresham please themselves with the "husks" of "virtuoso experiments," and the wits of Wills' rejoice in the "husks and the harlots" of modern comedy.

So much for the basis on which the Satire is built. When he has mapped this out, he breaks into the story: but it is of comparatively little importance, and he shows marvellously little adherence to the thread of such story as he has to tell. He soon digresses, and what follows is little more than an expansion of the theme which he has propounded in the introductory chapters. The ecclesiastical references are few: the main object of the satire is not this or that phase of religious opinion, but the inherent follies of the age: and even these follies themselves are shown to be only variations upon the everlasting weaknesses inherent in human nature.

If there is anyone to whose tone that of Swift bears a resemblance, it is the author of *Hudibras*.* The same, or nearly the same, follies, roused the ire of each. The same

* Mrs. Pilkington tells us how, long after, she found that Swift could repeat the whole of *Hudibras* by heart. (*Memoirs*, I., p. 136.)

contempt for the assumptions of infant science appears in each. By each the same tone of irony is assumed. Fanaticism provokes the same ridicule in the one and in the other. Each travesties the sophistries of the saints, and finds the origin of zeal in the vapours. But here the parallel ends. The thin and monotonous stream of Butler's wit is scarcely heard beside the full flow of Swift's satire. The method of each is different. Butler keeps close to the satire with which he pursues the fanatical sects of his day, and only occasionally illustrates it by glancing at some more general truth of human nature. With Swift it is exactly the reverse. From the larger glance with which he surveys human nature, he brings himself gradually down to analyse this or that phase of its follies. Butler works from his own surroundings outwards: Swift, from a wider view of human nature, works downwards and inwards. By turns he strikes at the Greshamites, with their fantastic and ill-balanced schemes of physical philosophy: at the wits of Wills', with their efforts after eccentricity that assumes the name of wit: at the fanatics, with their spleen and hatred, for which "they make a shift to find the plausible name of Zeal": at the universal treatises which were to make this age the wonder of the world, and to supersede such effete productions as those of Homer with his "gross ignorance of the Laws of this Realm:" at those proud possessors of mother wit,* whose imagination is much too lofty to submit to Reason: who made "Invention the master, and gave to Method and Reason only the office of its Lacqueys." These are the aims of his sarcasm, and to attain these aims he spends three-fourths of the book on those digressions, which give to his genius room for its lavishness of wit. Even when, from follies that are as old and as wide-reaching as human nature itself, and from the lower range of eccentric oddities

* "Whose imaginations are hard-mouthed, and exceedingly disposed to run away with their Reason, which I have observed from long experience, to be a very light rider, and easily shook off."

that were specially characteristic of his own age, he comes down to his parable on ecclesiastical disputes, he approaches these by a method all his own. The philosophy of clothes, as he explains, is seen in operation over all nature, mental and physical. On this profound philosophy rest all our arbitrary distinctions and all our current reverence for rank: and of this philosophy one phase is the religious adornment which divides us into sects. The fanaticism of our day, which accidental coincidences of vapours in the brain produce,* is as old as the Sect of the Æolists with their wind-bags, and as the phrenzy of the priestess of the Delphic oracle.

His contact with the religious sects that he found around him, is thus suggested by a broad and general theme of satire. But when he is once brought down to deal with these sects, he leaves us no reason for regretting that the portion of the book which contains the nominal story, is so small. The account of Martin, Jack and Peter, the names under which the Church of England, the Dissenters and the Romish Church are typified, is the poorest piece in the whole. The metaphors are often strained: their proportion is irregular: the satire has lost its wide human interest and has dwindled into detail. We are glad to get rid of Jack's aversion to bagpipes, of his indignation at sign-posts, of his prejudice against grace before meat. We are wearied with Peter's Roaring Bull, his pardons sold to Rogues, his Raree shows, and his all-comprehending bread. The grasp of Swift's satire throughout the greater part of the book shows us, by its own contrast, how comparatively narrow was this.

This part of the Tale is not only the weakest: it is also the most offensive. But it was this which struck the minds of contemporaries most quickly. It was here that the force of the parallels was most plainly perceived: and once perceived, we

* Compare *Hudibras*, Part II., Canto iii., v. 773, with the ninth section of the Tale.

can scarcely wonder that they caused offence. The most sacred mysteries of Christianity are treated with a callous indifference, of whose effect Swift was probably utterly unconscious. In writing the *Tale of a Tub*, Swift clearly gave himself a freedom in regard to religious matters which he never afterwards assumed. He never of set purpose adopted the tone of the sceptic, and such natural scepticism as was inherent in him, he afterwards tamed into silence. But in the *Tale of a Tub*, he treated religious matters not freely only, but with what to ordinary minds appears irreverence. This absolute unconsciousness of the effect of his own words, this impervious insensibility in uttering things from which most men would recoil, is seen still more notably at a later period of Swift's life, in that coarseness at once so noisome and so apathetic, which has left on his later pages a stain of another kind. The same characteristic, which it is difficult to disconnect from the forebodings of mental disease that cast a shadow on his life, now led him to stir to exasperation, and yet all unconsciously, the religious sentiments of those whose Church he desired to defend. But he neither weighed the consequences, nor could he afterwards understand the sensation that he caused. For us, however, it need cause no surprise. Swift had proclaimed war against the Wits and the Fanatics. Between him and them there never could be peace. And in the unrestrained flow of his satire there was plenty of material that helped the Wits and the Fanatics to rouse the susceptibilities of the Orthodox, and to represent Swift as a dangerous and irreligious buffoon. In the lavish metaphor, in the ever varying style, in the light cynicism of the Tale, there is none of the *saeva indignatio* that impelled Swift's later pen. But the foundation of much of his later trouble was laid in the struggle that was now begun. The wits and the pedants covered their shame under this one-sided aspect which they contrived to give to the book: the wide sweep of Swift's general sarcasm was overlooked, and undue weight was given

to the scattered pages that seemed to treat too lightly of religious symbols.*

Before we condemn unreservedly Swift's attitude towards these religious symbols, we must mark the impression made on him by the time at which he lived. It is only by a strong effort of imagination that we can bring ourselves to understand how deep and penetrating was the hatred of cant, stamped on almost all the leading intellects of the time by the recollection of what had gone before. The sufferings of his grandfather, for whom he bore so much reverence, the changed lot of his own family, his own associations with Presbyterian intolerance, intensified Swift's repugnance to the days of Puritan supremacy, and his contempt for the unctuous professions of religion which had been made the cloak for selfish political designs. It was the hatred of this cant that impelled Butler to write as he did in *Hudibras*. But in Swift there was something more. Puritanical cant led to a reaction which showed itself in a modish scepticism, and a heartless debauchery. Between the two, men might well despair. It was the hatred at once of the canting hypocrite and of the would-be wit, that made the motive of Swift's satire in the *Tale of a Tub*. Others might forget their repugnance, and might content themselves with moderation. Swift refused to forget, and to him moderation was impossible. He detested the hypocrisies of religion, he distrusted the solemn conventionalities which cloaked its treatment: and none of the fastidious reverence that might have held back other men from unrestrained ridicule operated for him.

From Butler, as we have seen, Swift adopted something of the tone that runs through the book: but a casual coincidence of tone and opinion is almost all that Swift borrowed from

* Swift's ridicule of the nasal snuffle of the fanatic, of his heavenward aspirations and his exceedingly earthly propensities, is most marked in the discourse at the close of the volume, *On the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit*. This is also noticeable as the coarsest of his early works.

the author of *Hudibras*. The mixed reading of these later years at Sir William Temple's house, is laid considerably under contribution for illustrations and quotations. Homer and Herodotus are cited: Irenæus is made to yield, as a motto for the book, the cabalistic sign which he describes as used by certain heretical sects in celebrating the rite of baptism: and here and there we find symptoms of Swift's study of French literature, in the use of words taken directly from the French. But of all authors the one quoted most often, and something in the spirit of whose genius seems most in sympathy with that of Swift, is Lucretius. Swift had, indeed, little enough in common with the philosophy of Lucretius. But in both we have the same gloom of cynicism. In both there is the same profound scorn of superstition, and yet the same belief that in superstition we must find the main source of most human action. In Swift as in Lucretius, the literary instinct has made the general and wide-reaching satire far more strong in its impression than the ostensible object of the book. If we read the *Tale of a Tub* with understanding of its real meaning, we have as little impression, at the end, of the quarrels of Peter and Martin and Jack, as we have, after reading the poem of Lucretius, of the niceties of the Epicurean system. Divided by eighteen centuries, there is yet much in the mental attitude of the two men that brings them close together. Swift's supposed debt to Rabelais is almost proverbial. But, after all, it is more in the following of a recognised vehicle of satire, than in anything else. Swift read Rabelais, as the acknowledged master of a peculiar style of sarcasm. The style has already become antiquated: and yet his adoption of it leaves the essential qualities of the *Tale of a Tub* absolutely unimpaired.

The book appeared in April or May, 1704, and just after its appearance, Swift set out for Ireland. It took no long time to make the world feel that a new power had appeared in literature. So early as June, 1704, when the book was only a few weeks old, we find the subject of its authorship canvassed.

Oxford, so we are told in a letter written by Atterbury of that date,* found the probable authors within her own circle. There were then at Oxford two young students, the one named Edmund Smith, whose tattered gown and still more tattered reputation got him the nickname of Captain Rag, the other John Philips, his demure, but likeable companion, much addicted to his bottle and his pipe.† To these two, the authorship of the *Tale of a Tub* was attributed: and their much belauded, but unproductive, wits may not have combated the rumour too eagerly. The belief that the author was to be found amongst this set was shown also in the well-meant ascription of the book to Smalridge, by Sacheverell.‡ But Smalridge's ecclesiastical reputation was of too much value to him to let him rest under the impeachment. Other rumours as to its authorship were invented by the curiosity of men. Swift's cousin Thomas, who had been chaplain in Sir William Temple's house, not only was credited with, but accepted, the honour, which a guess, more near the truth than the others, brought to him. Dr. Davenant, writing to Marl-

* *Atterbury to Trelawney. June*, 1704.

† The two were inseparable, and they formed a strange enough pair. Smith was as yet known beyond his friends only as the author of a Latin ode on Dr. Pocock: to the University he was known as one of the most outrageously profligate of her sons, whose scandals had been endured only on account of the reputation he enjoyed in a society where a little Greek went a long way, as the most complete and perfect Greek and Latin scholar the nation had produced. His own follies, and the conceit engendered by praises so ludicrous, destroyed what in spite of the nonsense written of him by his contemporaries may have been a genius of some promise. Patronized by Addison and Halifax, befriended by Prior, he came before the world a year later than this with a tragedy, called Phædra and Hippolitus, destined, as his friends believed, to destroy the debased taste for the Italian Opera, and outstripping, on their own ground, as these friends asserted, not Racine only, but Euripides. The tragedy was damned: and the author soon forgotten. Smith's companion, Philips, had already written a parody of Milton, called the "Splendid Shilling," and with less of brilliancy, yet enjoyed something of a sounder reputation than his friend.

‡ "Not all that you and I have in the world," said Smalridge, with unwitting truth, "nor all that ever we shall have, should hire me to write the *Tale of a Tub*." *Johnson's Lives.* (*Ed. Cunningham*), vol. 3, p. 165.

borough's secretary to ask a chaplaincy for this Thomas Swift, seeks to recommend him by crediting him with the authorship of the book whose effect has been so enormous.* By a still more extravagant absurdity a rumour was propagated in later years that Lord Somers was himself the author: that he and Lord Shrewsbury had excogitated the satire in their youthful leisure at Whiteladies in Worcestershire: and that they had found the prototypes for Martin, Jack and Peter in some respectable inmates of that house.†

How soon the impression of the real authorship became general, it is scarcely possible to say. Before Swift's breach with the Whigs was complete that impression had spread: but it was surrounded by doubt, which only slowly passed away. Dr. Johnson maintained that doubt‡ more than once in conversation, and repeats it, although with little tone of conviction, in his Life of Swift. Rightly finding in the Tale the most free and impetuous burst of Swift's genius, he let his personal repugnance to Swift lead him into the mistake of denying Swift's power to have been sufficient for its production. But in Johnson's day the disbelief was little more than a lingering paradox. It seems clear, that Swift's authorship was believed very soon after the book was written, that in spite of Bolingbroke's denial of the fact to Dr. King,§ it was impressed upon Queen Anne to Swift's disadvantage by the Duchess of Somerset and Archbishop Sharp, and that it hindered his promotion in the Church. But while this is almost certain, it is extremely doubtful whether those who sought to produce that effect on the Queen's mind were offended so much by Swift's references to the Church, as by the bearing of his satire in other directions. Swift intended

* The Letter is printed in a note to Nichol's "Collection of Poems," Vol. IV.

† See Cooksey's "Life of Lord Somers."

‡ Johnson, however, really produces the best argument against his own doubts, when he says, "No other claimant can be produced."

§ King mentions the denial in his Anecdotes (p. 60), but without giving it much credit.

no disloyalty to his party. In one passage where he names some prominent politicians with a touch of ridicule, they are Tories and not Whigs whom he chooses for the laugh.* Dedicated to Lord Somers, the Whig of Whigs, he could hardly have meant to offend that party. But attacks on fanaticism were inconvenient when the Whigs were seeking to join hands with the dissenters. The Whigs, too, were strong in Wills' and Gresham College, even if they did not find their own withers wrung in the attacks on Grub Street.†

From the general admiration which the genius of the book extorted even from angry readers, Congreve almost alone, perhaps with some memory of the sarcastic references to modern comedy in the Tale, felt himself bound to differ, although he allows that in doing so, he dissents from the "opinion of the multitude."‡ Blackmore, in spite of the lenient treatment he received in the *Battle of the Books*, now appended to the Tale, attacked the writer furiously. Wotton§ tried to avenge the sarcasms on himself and his ponderous ally Bentley, by commenting on the book: and Curll produced a so-called Key.‖

* He suggests to Seymour, Howe, and some others, a useful Bill for turning Bedlam to account. Section IX.

† See Appendix II., on the Editions of *Tale of a Tub*.

‡ "I am of your opinion as to the *Tale of a Tub*. I am not alone in the opinion, as you are there: but I am pretty near it, having but very few on my side: but those few are worth a million. However, I have never spoke my sentiments, not caring to contradict a multitude." *Congreve to Keally*, Oct. 28, 1704. Berkeley's "Literary Relics," p. 340.

§ Wotton attempted to bring the charge of plagiarism against the *Tale of a Tub*, as he did against the *Battle of the Books*. "The banter of transubstantiation is taken from the Duke of Buckingham's conference with an Irish priest. The duke bantering the doctrine by changing a cock into a horse," &c.

‖ It was in this, that Curll represented Thomas Swift as the chief author. Thomas Swift, it is said, began a defence of Sir William Temple under the title of *Tale of a Tub*. His companion, Jonathan Swift, borrowed it, took it to Ireland, kept it for seven years, and published it imperfect, "for indeed he was unable to finish it after the intended method"—although he added the dedication and digressions (which, as Curll did not see, are the best parts of the book). Wotton's *Defence of his Reflexions on Ancient and Modern Learning*, appended to

Before we leave this year we must turn to another of its experiences for Swift, in a matter which lay still closer to his heart, and which was to determine more decidedly than anything which had gone before, the bearings of his inner life.

Esther Johnson and Rebecca Dingley, her companion, had now been for some years resident in Ireland. Stella had shared Swift's household cares, had been near him both at Trim and in Dublin, and had rested upon his advice in the conduct of her life and the management of her little fortune. When absent from Ireland, he, even so early as this, corresponded with her constantly. But in their friendship so far, only the old ties of Moor Park were renewed and perhaps drawn a little closer: and to Swift at least no thought had been suggested of a still more intimate bond. The fear of compromising his independence, his morbid looking forward to a goal always in the distance, may help, but only help, to explain a decision so mysterious. But it now appeared that the relation which had been so pleasant to Swift was not to proceed without being forced to define itself more clearly. He was awakened from the dream which he indulged of carrying on through life the uneventful companionship of tutor and pupil: and for the first time, perhaps, he found he had to deal with a woman's heart.

While he was last in Dublin, he had renewed an old acquaintanceship with Dr. William Tisdall, whom he had known in the days of his residence at Kilroot. Tisdall had come to Dublin from Belfast, and had brought thence, like Swift, a strong jealousy of the Presbyterians, a readiness to combat them in literary controversy,* and a high churchman-

the 3rd edition in 1705, contains his comments. He attacked Swift as the editor of "Temple's Miscellanies;" and speaks of "his brother" as the reputed "editor" of the *Tale of a Tub*. Brother is, of course, a mistake for cousin: and Wotton asserts that this "brother" obtained a living from Lord Somers at Temple's intercession, in spite of which "he played upon" Lord Somers in the Dedication. Wotton's scent for sarcasm is keen!

* See *Swift to Tisdall*. Feb. 3, 170$\frac{4}{5}$.

ship that had made him more of a Tory than Swift was as yet prepared to proclaim himself, but not more than secured for him a good deal of Swift's sympathy. While Swift was absent from Dublin during this winter, Tisdall saw much of Stella and of Mistress Dingley, and was apparently entrusted by Swift with some of their business affairs. Swift carried on with him a correspondence on the political affairs of the day, and especially on that topic that, more than any other, was making ecclesiastical bias the criterion of party, the Bill against Occasional Conformity. As the letters proceed, the political references become more impatient and more transient, and the tone of irony on Tisdall's pretensions to Stella's favour, more distinct. But Swift's banter seemed to Tisdall only a wilful ignoring of his claims. He had proposed in proper form, for Stella's hand, and he seems to have resented not so much Swift's claim to decide the question, as Swift's interference with the suit from personal motives. He wrote in anger, and Swift replied with the perfect temper that now and then he could assume in spite of bitter feelings. The incident does not seem to be a very extraordinary or inexplicable one. Swift found himself suddenly confronted with the necessity of choosing to make Stella indisputably his own, or of parting with her love to another. He was anxious to avoid either alternative, and he acted as this anxiety prompted. The over-minuteness of biographical criticism has concocted further evidence about the incident, favourable to Swift or the reverse. On the one hand Deane Swift, whose eccentric judgments scarcely merit much attention, thinks it well to make a show of impartiality in blaming his kinsman for preventing a promising alliance by insisting upon terms to which Tisdall could not yield. Sheridan, who is almost as little to be trusted as Deane Swift in details like this, ascribes the rejection to Stella and to Stella only. Looking to Swift's own letters we have an explanation, as simple as it well could be, of an incident, unpleasant indeed for Swift, entangled by the

strange conditions that he had imposed on himself and Stella, but reflecting no stain of selfishness or cruelty upon him. He admits most cordially to Tisdall his preference for Stella above all other women.* He avows to him his wish that the suit should be carried on in the form most just and most respectful to Stella and to Stella's mother. But in avowing to Tisdall that marriage was a thing that neither his own fortune nor his humour ever allowed to cross his mind, Swift gave intimation quite as plain that this and this only kept him back from claiming the love of Stella. Tisdall's love of domestic peace and happiness he warmly congratulates: and with something of sadness, he contrasts the unfruitful ambition that was eating up his own years.†

Most men would have understood this hint. It was perfectly clear that Swift had chosen Stella's as the love he was to cherish through life. Quite as clear is it that he knew Stella had chosen his. He had formed ambitions for himself and her, which might be ended for ever by the blundering of one who had intervened in a friendship that was tolerably well known to the world, and who had done so with less, and not more, to offer her, in the way of worldly goods, than Swift himself possessed. Swift could not, nay more, he would not, clinch the friendship by marriage, merely in order to have an answer for Tisdall. He told him, however, almost as plainly as words could, what his own views were, and what it was that as yet kept Stella and himself apart. The letter was written just before he left London, and it had the desired effect of closing the episode. Swift never forgot the grudge against Tisdall, and is never doubtful about getting a response to his own ill-feeling against him, from

* "If my fortunes and humour served me to think of that state, I should certainly, amongst all persons on earth, make your choice: because I never saw that person whose conversation I entirely valued, but hers."

† "I give you joy of your good fortunes, and envy very much your prudence and temper, and love of peace and settlement: the reverse of which has been the great uneasiness of my life, and is likely to continue so."

Stella.* But when he came back to Dublin he must have found clear proof that the ascendancy which he had gained over her heart in the old days at Moor Park was stronger than he had dreamed. The open avowal of his preference for her above all women, must have forced on him a much more definite recognition of his relations for the future, to her whose conversation alone "he entirely valued, and who, of all persons in the world, would be his choice." Alas, for his own life's peace, these plans still looked forward to something to come, instead of grasping the present. Ambition had first to be satisfied. Then, and not till then, might there be room and time for love.

* The Journal has many references to infirmities of Tisdall, which only Swift's morbid insensibility to what was coarse could make him recall.

CHAPTER V.

YEARS OF WAITING AND SUSPENSE.

1704—1708.

ÆTAT. 37—41.

Swift's position in literature and politics—The decadence of the Tories—Successes of the Whigs—Blenheim—Tory factiousness—Dissolution of 1705—The Irish Parliament—Swift's early efforts for his Church—Correspondence with Archbishop King—Contrasts between the characters of Swift and King—The Tories and the Church—*The Memorial of the Church of England*—Convocation—Hopelessness of the Tory cause—Swift's personal life—His associates in London—His place amongst them—His literary work during these years—*Meditation on a Broom Stick*—*Vanbrugh's House*—*Baucis and Philemon*—Long stay in Ireland—Invitation to Moor Park—Continued suspense—Ministers leaning to the Whigs—Pembroke, Lord Lieutenant—Society at the Castle—The "Castilian" Language—Swift in London again—Hopes and disappointment—Harley's scheme—Its failure—Dismissal of the Tory remnant—Swift's labour to secure the First Fruits for his Church—His meeting with Godolphin—Wavering allegiance to his party—The death of Prince George—A new period opening for Swift.

In the last chapter we saw how Swift had gone back to Ireland just before Midsummer, 1704, already with some feelings of dissatisfaction with the Whigs, although little inclined to break with those associations that had hitherto bound him to their party. In this chapter there is but little to tell of the personal details of Swift's life, for the four years that follow. But we may trace with some certainty the effect which the shifting phases of the party struggle had on his future during these years. We may get one step forward in the discovery of what caused that change in his party allegiance which has been so often ascribed to dishonest motives. We may see him gradually assuming a larger place in the brilliant literary

circles of the day: and acquiring, year by year, greater stubbornness of purpose, greater independence in his choice of action, and greater keenness of cynical contempt.

When Swift left London he had already the reputation of a keen and effective controversialist, and of a master in a characteristic vein of humour. By his intimates, his genius was rated higher: but it must not be forgotten that not one of those works on which his later fame rests, was yet published; and that he forebore to grasp the wider fame which the *Tale of a Tub*, when it appeared soon after, might have brought to him. During the three or four years that followed, we may observe no infrequent signs of the impression that his genius had produced. We see the beginnings of those friendships which helped to define his literary position, and we find him associating with the great on terms that prove how his power had already made itself felt. But such glimpses are now merely fragmentary. For the most part, during these years, he seems to stay his hand, amid the uncertainty of the political struggle, and the doubt he felt as to his own position therein. It is only when that position is gaining new definiteness, and his aims are becoming more clear, that he again tries his pen on any important efforts.

The change in the fortunes of political parties during these years was indeed rapid. At the beginning of 1704, the Tory party seemed not only to be in possession of power, but to be in a fair way of maintaining, if not of advancing, its influence. The dissenters were unpopular: and from that unpopularity, the Tories were most likely to benefit. They could further count upon the inclination of the Queen in their favour. The Whig junta, whatever sympathy it might have from some of the ministers, seemed then far enough from realizing its hopes.

But when little more than a year had passed, Toryism had become completely demoralized; and the process is interesting in Swift's life, as it shows us why Swift still refused to be a Tory, in the sense in which Toryism was understood in 1704 and 1705. The stars in their courses, indeed, fought against

Toryism. If a Tory admiral gained successes, they stopped short, as it were in very spite, of the point which could make them great national triumphs. There were discontented Whigs who murmured against the Government: but the only effect of their murmurs was to strengthen the Ministers, and make them more free to show their independence of extreme party views. In the spring of 1704, the Government had been ostensibly Tory: before the close of the year, not only were many of its members changed, but those who remained were more inclined to show their independence of Tory dictation.

First came the victory of Blenheim. With a hazardous recklessness of enterprise which success, and success alone, could justify, Marlborough had disregarded the nervous timidity and the pedantic expostulations of the citizen strategists of the Dutch States, had left the neighbourhood of the Low Countries, had effected a junction with Prince Eugene, and with him had advanced to meet Tallard and the Elector of Bavaria in the heart of Europe. The allies had met a force of sixty thousand men, the pick of the French army, with a deficiency of eight thousand in point of numbers, and with the additional disadvantage of having to cross an almost impassable morass in the face of a scathing fire. Never was success more brilliant. With a total loss in killed and wounded of about thirteen thousand, the allies cut to pieces the army of the Grand Monarch. Of the sixty thousand soldiers that had met them only twenty thousand, at most, ever fought again beneath the standard of Louis.

The victory was won on the 13th of August, 1704. News like this had never reached England within the memory of man. The nation fairly lost its head in the rejoicings. Fickle as she afterwards proved, England was now ready to rush into exaggeration in the pride she felt in Marlborough's feat.

Time only was necessary to wear out the triumph. The war would certainly become irksome: the weight of the taxes would be felt: the successes would grow paler: the objects

of the war less clear. Heedless of this, the Tories began the attack as soon as Parliament met, on the 29th of October. The Bill against Occasional Conformity was once more pressed, but without the aid of St. John, and against the now avowed opposition of the Ministers. It passed the Commons: and in order to press it through the Lords, an expedient was found, drawn from the worst period of Charles the Second's reign. A plan was formed of tacking the Bill to a Money Bill, and so throwing upon the Lords the responsibility of rejecting it, and of stopping supplies at a moment of all others most critical. The plan was fortunately defeated. The more moderate Tories stood aloof: and the rabid of their party showed only 134 votes against 251. Their headlong rashness had failed to ruin the constitution, but had to all appearance shattered their own party. Demoralization never proceeded more rapidly, and never seemed to be more complete. The Ministers were free to disembarrass themselves of such Tories as remained in their ranks; and on the 5th of April, 1705, Parliament was dissolved.

In Ireland, matters seemed to go as well for the Government, with its newly-developed Whiggism. Parliament there met on the 10th of Feb. 170$\frac{4}{4}$. The Commons expressed their devoted loyalty to England: their zeal for the Church was avowed in language studiously moderate, and had acquired none of that aggressive vehemence which soon after became a sign of party feeling. They voted the required supplies: and then turned to schemes for the improvement of trade. Under each of these questions, there smouldered some fire that was to burst out later in Swift's life: but as yet the danger was not visible. It was only when a proposal for the improvement of the Hemp and Flax manufacture (one of the few industries that the economic selfishness and blindness of England had left to Ireland) came under consideration, that dangerous ground was reached. In the course of this a question as to the commutation of the tithe payable to the clergy

upon these manufactures, was mooted: the indignation of the Irish House of Convocation was roused: the clergy and the Commons bandied words with one another; but when the struggle threatened to rise high, it was stayed by a summary prorogation. It is curious that no biographer of Swift has taken notice of this quarrel, anticipating a struggle in which thirty years later he took so active a part. These thirty years, indeed, made his voice more authoritative, and defined his attitude: but the indication of a desire to curb the rights of his order doubtless excited in the mind of Swift, much the same feelings in 1705 as in 1733.

Already Swift had begun to exert himself for privileges of the kind which appeared to be here attacked, and had begun an effort which was ultimately to complete his separation from the Whigs. He had already entered on that long correspondence with Archbishop King * of Dublin, which endured, in

* William King had been a prominent adherent of the Revolution, and had proved the sincerity of his convictions by undergoing imprisonment at the hands of James II. As a first reward he received the Bishopric of Derry, and in 1703 was translated to Dublin, where he continued to be a commanding figure in Dublin Society and in Irish politics for a quarter of a century. "I have great reason to be vain," writes Lady Carteret to Lady Sundon in 1724, "of having the Archbishop of Dublin for my lover. Few people have his wit and spirit. He is a prodigy at fourscore."—*Sundon MS. Brit. Mus.*) His Palace of St. Pulcher's, or St. Sepulchre's, now transformed into a barracks, stood close to the Deanery in which Swift passed the last thirty years of his life. In principles a staunch Whig, he fell into disfavour when Toryism came for a few years to the front, and recovered his influence when the Hanoverian succession had actually taken place. But in his later years he found himself set aside as interfering with Walpole's scheme of governing Ireland from England only: and offended personal feeling threw him into the arms of the Irish Patriots. Never stooping to dishonesty, he yet never professed to set aside views of worldly ambition, and remained to the end a shrewd and clear-eyed man of business, graceful in manners and yet with a certain assumption of commonplace moralizing. It was this last that grated on Swift. Lord Orrery tells a story of King having been instrumental in preventing Swift's appointment as Dean of Derry, on account partly of his youth, partly, as was alleged, of his constant visits to London. The story is without other authority. Thus much, at least, may be said: Swift never gives a hint of this ground of complaint in any letter to King, where angry encounters are constantly

spite of many strains and much irritation on both sides, till death ended it in 1729. These strains and that irritation were due to an essential difference of temperament between the two men. Swift was keen in his likes and dislikes, vehement in his partisanship, impatient of patronage and advice, and indisposed to tolerate mediocre ability in any assumption based on official rank. King was prosaic, moderate in character, domineering in his diocese, inclined to be pompous in his relations with those of inferior rank, and suspicious of those around him. We shall have to view some curious passages of arms: and Swift's feeling, at its worst, is summed up in his own words, that the Archbishop was "a wit and a scholar, but I hate him as I hate garlick."*

Before the close of 1704, Swift had written from Trim to the Archbishop, then in London, urging on his attention the necessity of striving for a remission of the first fruits and tenths to the Church in Ireland. A concession of the same sort had been granted in England on the occasion of the last Royal birthday (6th Feb., $170\frac{4}{5}$), and Swift sought to gain for his own church a favour analogous to that which founded the Queen Anne Bounty Fund. The matter involved scarcely any pecuniary benefit to Swift himself. His influence with the Archbishop might well, under the prompting of self-interest, have been husbanded for personal objects: and to become known as importuning for such a claim was not a good way to gain the patronage of the Ministry. But the zeal that he here shows did not slack till he had won his point, and this was not till after he had fairly broken with Godolphin's ministry.

The election in England was now proceeding. The Tories

repeated: he never refers to it to any other correspondent: and throughout their long acquaintance he is frequently on terms of cordial friendship which would be unlikely, had he known that King was the cause of his first disappointment in the struggle of life.

* Quoted by Lord Orrery in some MS. notes in an edition of his Remarks, belonging to Lord Cork.

were hard pressed. One question and one question only seemed likely to serve as a rallying cry: Was the Church in danger? Some day they might trust to the national instinct being thereby excited and kindled into fervour; but now they found it to be a question that did not admit of very clear and definite statement. Their defence of the Church was at once timorous and bigoted: their political principles were as yet both factious and chaotic.

Confused as were their aims, the Tories were compelled to resort to several incompatible election cries. The Whigs, with a clear issue before them, and resting on the successes gained in a war, as to which the nation had as yet no misgiving, naturally carried the day at the elections. While the Tories were still only planning a method of attack, the Whigs succeeded in sending a majority to the new Parliament of 1705.

The summer months brought new successes abroad, celebrated in London with all the usual pomp of a religious ceremonial likely to impress a London crowd. Within a week of that thanksgiving service, however, on the 31st of August, the Grand Jury had to consider a so-called seditious libel. The Church party had begun their attack: and a pamphlet which was now prosecuted, called the Memorial of the Church of England,* may well be considered the war-note of the High Churchmen against a Ministry which they now entirely distrusted. The Church, so it was affirmed, might seem outwardly to be flourishing: but within "there is a hectick fever, lurking in the very bowels of it." The deeds of the Dissenters, when they had the Church in their power, are recapitulated: the hopes that they had been encouraged to form under William III.: the despair that had overtaken them on his death: their continued rancour: the bitterness with which all the enemies of presbytery were proscribed in Scotland:

* "*The Memorial of the Church of England, humbly offered to the consideration of all true lovers of our Church and Constitution.*" It was written by Dr. Drake, with the help of others.

and finally the renewed hopes which they cherished from the timidity and prevarication of the Ministers in connexion with the Bill against Occasional Conformity.

On the 25th of October, the new English Parliament met in circumstances most favourable to the Whigs. That party was growing stronger day by day, and was closing in upon the Court itself. In the last days of October, it is true, the staunch and humorous Tory, Arbuthnot, Swift's friend of after years, found favour sufficient to obtain the post of Physician to the Queen; but he must have found his post an irksome one in its surroundings for some years to come. The relative strength of parties may be taken as represented in the voting on the Speaker's election, when the Whig candidate obtained 248 votes against 205 for his opponent.

The cry of "The Church in Danger," hereafter to be an overwhelmingly strong one, was as yet little more than the feeble grumbling of a discontented faction. The murmur was at length brought to the issue of debate. Rochester, Nottingham, Haversham, and some of the Bishops urged the reality of the danger: Halifax, Somers and Wharton ridiculed it as a delusion invented by an ill-affected faction. The impression left by such fragments of the debate as are preserved, is that of a wrangle where neither side fully stated their views. The Tories could, indeed, assert that Occasional Conformity was permitted: that sectaries were numerous: that Ministers were wavering friends of the Church. But they could not say, although they felt, that the hopes of the Dissenters had been encouraged by the late King: that these hopes, after a brief eclipse, were again in the ascendant in view of the Hanoverian succession. They could not complain of the hopes of the Dissenters during the past century without reviving the lingering suspicions that the Church had suffered because she had been inclined towards Popery and absolute power. They could not point to their fears for the future without implicating themselves in a charge of Jacobitism.

On the other hand the Whigs were compelled on their side to show the same insincerity. They could not boldly say "we have allowed Occasional Conformity, because it strengthens the Dissenters on whose support we have to rely." They could scarcely profess, "You Churchmen have a monopoly which it may be needful to curtail, and your creed contains dogmas which may run counter to a break in the Succession. You helped on the Revolution, no doubt, but you were forced into an inconsistency in so doing. We have shaken ourselves free from these hamperings, and we are resolved to proceed, if need be, further in the same course." All this the Whigs might have said, but could not: still less could the Ministers, who were as yet hardly the proclaimed allies of the Whigs.

The Church was declared not to be in danger: and this speculative opinion adopted by the Lords, was imitated by the House of Commons. It served as a new stage in the definition of parties: the Church was driven one step farther from the Whigs, and the Ministers were driven one step closer to them. The full meaning of this afterwards became apparent.

The extreme Churchmen were, for the time, worsted in Parliament: and they fared no better in their proper domain. Convocation, too, saw this year a struggle between the High and the Low Church party. The Bishops in the Upper House agreed upon an address that repudiated all idea of danger to the Church. To this the more fiery High Churchmen of the Lower House refused to agree. They drew up an address of their own, which adroitly evaded the point in question, and showed their conviction that, if the Church were not in danger, its safety was due only to the benign influence of the Queen, and not to the care of her Ministers. Atterbury, again, stood in the forefront of the struggle. The contest raged fiercely, and the constitution of the Church seemed scarcely equal to the strain. At length prorogation was fixed on by the Ministers: and the Prolocutor was summoned to hear the Queen's mandate read in the Upper House. He came surrounded by

a group of his supporters, amongst whom was Atterbury. The Queen's letter was read: but scarcely had the Bishop of Norwich, who was acting for the Archbishop, begun to read, when its purport, of proroguing convocation, was perceived. Atterbury's heat almost broke into open violence. Plucking the Prolocutor's sleeve, he cried, "Begone: we have no business here." But on the other side there was one, scarcely less bold or less prone to excitement. Gilbert Burnet of Sarum, while his brethren sat in amazement, stepped from his seat to the bar, rated the group for their insolence, and bade the Prolocutor quit the House at his peril. The threat was enough: the prorogation was pronounced, and for the time the crisis was past.

In March, $170\frac{6}{5}$, these winter sessions came to a close. They left the Tories still a scattered party. They had not learned their watchwords well. They had reached, as yet, no principle which could command the ardent support of any but the partizan. They had as yet attained to no popular cry which might gain them the ear of the country. In politics they were no more than a faction: in the Church they were nervous bigots. Their opponents had a safe majority in Parliament, and two more sessions of that favourable Parliament to run; and might well afford to overlook the attacks of a disorderly and heterogeneous opposition.

Swift had crossed to Ireland in May, 1704, and remained there till April, 1705. During the summer and autumn that followed, while the Whigs were to all appearance rapidly growing in power and importance, he was in London, and in constant intercourse with all the leading members of the party, both political and literary. For the first time we catch some glimpses of his intercourse with the choicest spirits of the day: for the only time, perhaps, we find that intercourse unalloyed by any bitterness of political alienation. Swift was still a Whig: the hopes of his party were still rising. Those with whom he associated were no longer men whose civility

was of the proverbial type that belongs to cast courtiers. If he had misgivings as to party allegiance, if his invincible independence suggested to him lines of divergence from his party, this would only tend to make him appear less of a rival to those of his associates who were thorough Whigs, less of a partizan to those others who leaned to the Tories. No period of Swift's life, perhaps, contains more of happiness than this ; if he was unsettled, he was also to a great extent free from the disagreeable trammels of party ties. He was now in the prime of manhood, with experience widened, but energies not slacked. He had found congenial work, even though compelled to let the laurels lie ungathered. The illness that was to torture him through life had not yet suggested to him its full strength and pertinacity. The position he had attained in the Church, did not indeed answer to his expectations, and still left him a poor man : but he was already independent, and his hopes were high. The bitter humour, the self-torture, the cynicism from whose ravages he was himself the chief sufferer, had not as yet been stirred to their depths. At Laracor he had quiet occupations as a relief from the doubts and anxieties of politics. When he broke from that scene, it was to pass weeks at Leicester with his mother, in his affection for whom Swift had well-nigh the only deep-lying emotion that was to him even as it is to other and more ordinary men. From Leicester he could come to London to find honoured welcome by his brother wits, held free of the company by all, recognised as its leader already by a few. If he touches for pastime on politics, it is within a range where he carries the sympathy of his associates. If he had begun a struggle for his Church, it had not yet reached that pitch of intensity that made failure appear a personal insult and injury, prompting him to abjure the bond of political allegiance. And pervading all his life, already leavening all his friendships, there was the one enduring tenderness of his life—the companionship of her he valued most on earth.

It was now that Swift first drew close to one whose friend-

ship, in spite of all later jarrings of opinion, retained a deep and vital influence over him. Addison had not yet graduated as the chosen champion of the Whigs in literature: but he was already the member of the Whig coterie whose sanity of judgment, and whose tutored genius gave him amongst the brotherhood a weight that no other had. He had ended his work as bear-leader: he was now attacking the town, whither he had come with the reputation of a scholarship as polished, and a wit as fine, as any that belonged to the coterie of Christ Church: but tainted by none of their malignancy of faction. He had just published his volume of Italian travels, and the copy which he presented to Swift is still preserved in Mr. Forster's library, with the inscription,

> "*To Dr. Jonathan Swift,*
> *The most agreeable companion,*
> *The Truest Friend,*
> *And the Greatest Genius of his Age,*
> *This Book is presented by his most*
> *Humble servant the Authour.*" *

The feeling that existed between the two is clear enough from such words, used by one who weighed their meaning well. In later years Swift would recall their meetings: how they talked long into the night, so engrossed in one another that they sought no third companion in their talk.† In all Swift's experience, was there one other man, who filled the place that Addison might have filled for him? In all the circle that bowed down to Addison, was there one who could, or did, perform that office of adviser, at once critical and appreciative, in which Swift might have done so much for Addison's future fame? We know how both regretted later alienations, how they strove to overlook them, how they inveighed against the violence of party that kept men asunder. But now they were

* Mr. Forster infers not rashly, that he who wrote these words at least suspected the authorship of the *Tale of a Tub*. The words contain more than a conventional compliment.

† Delany's Observations, p. 32.

close friends, admiring, with the generosity of genius, the gifts that belonged to each. In the little notebooks of personal expenses which Swift kept with care and regularity, and several of which accident has preserved for us, we find the companionship marked by many an entry that records their meetings.*

There were others too, in the circle. Congreve was knit to Swift not by the brotherhood of wit only, but by the associations with the old school at Kilkenny, where both had been educated under the shadow of the castle of the Ormonds. Congreve was now in the zenith of his fame: not yet what he afterwards became, the battered beau and spoilt favourite of a lady† of rank, who took her pastime in literature; but still the most brilliant wit, the most facile comedian, and the choicest boon companion of the day. Prior, with all his slipshod laxity, and his pursuit of a tattered and counterfeit fashion, was keen enough in his appreciation of genius, to know that one a head and shoulders higher than his surroundings, was come amongst them, and he cultivated the friendship of Swift accordingly. Ambrose Philips, the author of the Pastorals, gibbeted to a not very enviable immortality by the nickname of Namby-Pamby, and by the mention he found in Pope's satire at a far later day, was now by the accident of political comradeship, admitted to the friendship of Swift.‡ Another of the circle was Richard Steele, hereafter to come to close quarters with Swift, and to emerge from the combat, after proving

* Thus: "Tav^{m}, Addison, 2*s.* 6*d.*; Tav^{n}, Addison, 1*s.*; Tav^{m}, Addis^{n}, 4*s.* 9*d.*," and so on: see note-books in the Forster Library at South Kensington.

† The story of poor Congreve's blind and gouty decadence, when under the degrading patronage of the daughter and heiress of the great Duke of Marlborough, he became a pampered doll, to be replaced after death by a puppet fashioned after his likeness, is a familiar one. We shall find, hereafter, that Swift's friendship did not wane, even under the clouds of political dissension, and when Congreve had lost all but the memory of his power to charm.

‡ Of Philips we shall hear more when he crosses Swift's horizon, as the secretary of Archbishop Boulter, when the Drapier was a name dreaded in all the circles of orthodox Whiggism.

how small a man of real genius might make himself appear. Vanbrugh, the brisk comedian whose laurels had been gathered by facile adaptations from the French, with occasional aberrations in the direction of architecture and heraldry, had already become the butt of what was, for Swift, no unkindly satire on the tiny edifice he had raised on the ruins of Whitehall,—a house whose weight, Swift asserted, was enough to tax the strength of no less than four sturdy porters.

Swift, lodging, most probably, as we know was his habit in later years, in some of the suburban purlieus of St. James's, had already become a notable figure in this company, which met at Wills' Coffee House in Bow Street, or in the St. James's Coffee House, where the Whigs at that time most resorted. First, a few had heard of the uncouth Irishman, tamed by Sir William Temple, with eccentricities which it was amusing to exaggerate. Then, he had entered the arena of political controversy: had returned with some triumph from the fray, and was patronized by the leading official Whigs, from whom the literary clique were prepared to take their cue. Next he became known as the author of various occasional pieces, each with its own peculiar strokes of humour or of grace. The *Tale of a Tub* indeed found an audience which was both wide and appreciative: but its authorship was a matter of hazardous guesswork except to a very few. Certainly known as the author of some of these pieces, and vaguely credited with the authorship of more, Swift had just the sort of reputation that would gain him a ready reception amongst the wits, to whom his indifference as to literary fame was some recommendation, as it precluded rivalry. In later years Swift, with his usual cynical candour, professed that his literary efforts were directed to gaining the social distinction which was not his by birth.*

* "I will farther tell you that all my endeavours from a boy to distinguish myself, were only for want of a title and fortune, that I might be used like a lord by those who have an opinion of my parts: whether right or wrong, it is no great matter; and so the reputation of wit or great learn-

But his cynicism stands convicted of inconsistency by the fact that in these years when social distinction had to be gained, he relinquished that which might have come from acknowledging what he had written. From first to last Swift's attitude to his literary work is as strange as much else that puzzles us in his conduct. Keenly anxious about the fortune of his books, keenly alive to the criticism with which they meet, he is yet careless as to the method of their appearance. Ambitious of power, and willing to use every means of increasing his influence, he yet keeps up a mystery, more or less constant, about the authorship of them all. Alive to the help which money gives to independence, and gradually increasing in his attention to it, he nevertheless neglects, in almost every instance, the pecuniary gain which authorship might have brought.* From first to last, with all his changes of mood, Swift's authorship is a thing of accident, pursued with no certain aim, regulated by no fixed idea, despising rules either of expediency or of art.

A story is told of his first entry into one of the haunts of the wits, which we may take to have been the St. James's Coffee House.† Those who frequented the place had been astonished day after day by the entry of a clergyman, unknown to any there, who laid his hat on a table, and strode up and down the room with a rapid step, heeding no one and absorbed in his own thoughts. His strange manner earned him, unknown as he was to all, the name of the "mad parson." On one evening in particular, Addison and the rest were watching him, when

ing does the office of a blue ribband, or of a coach and six horses." *Swift to Pope*, 5 Ap. 1729.

* "I never got a farthing by anything I writ, except one about eight years ago, and that was by Mr. Pope's prudent management for me." (*Swift to Pulteney*, 12 May, 1735.) This was *Gulliver's Travels*, the copyright of which seems to have been bought by Motte for £300. The *Miscellanies* which Swift and Pope published, about the same time as *Gulliver*, also yielded some profit: but Swift resigned it to Pope.

† Sheridan tells it as of Button's, the coffee-house in Russell Street, Covent Garden, where Addison "gave his little senate laws:" but Button's was not established till 1712.

he was observed to cast his eyes on a country gentleman who had just entered the tavern. At length he approached, and abruptly addressed him, within earshot of the listening circle. "Pray, sir," said Swift, "do you remember any good weather in the world?" The countryman stared, but recovering himself, presently answered, "Yes, sir, I thank God, I remember a great deal of good weather in my time." "That is more," said Swift, "than I can say: I never remember any weather that was not too hot, or too cold: too wet, or too dry: but, however God Almighty contrives it, at the end of the year 'tis all very well:" and with these words he left the astonished crowd as usual. The story is told on the authority of Ambrose Philips: and anticipating as it does, the wayward humour, and impetuous eccentricities of Swift's later days, it serves to tell something of the impression that Swift left amongst his friends of these early and little known days.

Of the humorous pieces which he had now produced, and which were all that employed his activity during these years of waiting and watching, there are three which are characteristic enough to deserve special notice. One of these is a parody of the eminently respectable Robert Boyle, whose Moral Meditations had proved too much for the patience of Swift, when compelled to read them aloud as a pious sedative to the Lady Berkeley. To scoff at the Lady's chosen counsellor might prove inconvenient: so Swift hit upon the device of inserting his own manuscript in the volume, and reading, as one of the discourses, a meditation on a Broom-Stick, moralizing with the gravest comedy over the vicissitudes that attend its lot. It served as well as any of the discourses which it parodied, to attune the aristocratic listener to a sedate and soothing condition of pious satisfaction: and when detected, showed the estimate that Swift had formed of the discourses clearly enough to release him from the drudgery of reading them. Evanescent as was its occasion, it is significant that one of Swift's earliest skits should have been directed against what

was, or appeared to him to be, pious cant. Another piece, already alluded to, consists of some light, and not ill-natured ridicule of the house that Vanbrugh, the comedian, herald, and Royal architect, had built for himself on a part of the site of Whitehall. An earlier version of the lines than that which was afterwards published, was discovered by Mr. Forster at Narford,* and by him certain verses, before unprinted, have been reproduced. In either version, the main object is not the ridicule of the tiny house which it pleased Vanbrugh's fancy to build: but rather the corruption of the contemporary stage, and the feebleness of contemporary wit. The printed version seems to differ from that discovered by Mr. Forster, chiefly, if not entirely, in the greater clearness of the purpose, the greater flow of the humour, the excision of what was tawdry and obscure. The pigmy structure, which owes its origin to the flimsy creations of feeble wit, and which has replaced the palace of Whitehall, is itself a type of modern pretentiousness:

"Like Bacchus thou, as Poets feign
Thy mother burnt, art born again;
Born like a Phœnix from the flame:
But neither bulk nor shape the same;
As Animals of largest Size,
Corrupt to Maggots, Worms, and Flies,
A type of Modern Wit and Style,
The Rubbish of an Ancient Pile.
So Chymists boast, they have a power
From the dead ashes of a flower,
Some faint resemblance to produce;
But not the virtue, taste or juice.
So modern Rhymers wisely blast,
The poetry of Ages past,†
Which after they have overthrown,
They from its Ruins build their own."

The remaining piece that claims notice as characteristic

* Narford, in Norfolk, is the residence of the family descended from Sir Andrew Fountaine, often mentioned in the Journal, as an intimate of Swift, both in London and in Dublin under Lord Pembroke's lieutenancy.

† It is worth noting here, as well as more than once in the *Tale of a Tub*, how Swift returns to the depreciation

of this period of his life, is one that is almost unique amongst the efforts of his pen—the *Baucis and Philemon*. Unlike his later style, it contains from first to last scarcely a touch of satire: the whole piece depends simply and entirely on its grace, and facility, and marvellous deftness of description. The old story of mythology is translated into a modern dress, but with skilful avoidance of all appearance of mere burlesque. Of this poem, also, Mr. Forster found at Narford a version with considerable differences from that which was published: and to these differences some added interest belongs. The hand of Addison was known* to have been exercised on the poem, and his obliterations and excisions were accepted by Swift with a magnanimity which few authors are strong enough to show. The changes, it appears, were chiefly in the direction of shortening: and this shortening was accomplished, as the Narford manuscript shows, by cutting out many strokes that gave vigour and force to the description. In the first version, the reception of the Hermits, "Saints by trade," in the village where their miracle was to be wrought, gives a much more vivid picture of the villagers, disturbed by the begging of "two sturdy rascals" with their usual "stroller's cant"; the hospitality of Yeoman Philemon and Goody Baucis is drawn with more fulness of detail: and the metamorphosis of the pair into the parson and the parson's wife, and of their kitchen into the parish church, is even more lively than it was as published. Addison doubtless applied to the piece some canon of taste which Swift admired and respected, in spite of its divergence from his own. But whatever changes it suffered, the piece remains as that where Swift's wit is perhaps in happiest opera-

of the Moderns as compared with the Ancients, showing that however casual might have been the occasion of the *Battle of the Books*, the view it supported continued to be cherished by Swift.

* As a proof of Swift's readiness to listen to admonition, Dr. Delany repeats the fact, "which Swift himself was often wont to mention, that in a poem of not two hundred lines (*Baucis and Philemon*) Mr. Addison made him blot out fourscore, add fourscore, and alter fourscore." *Observations*, p. 19.

tion, sportive, light, and fanciful, and with no suspicion of bitterness. As a rule, his wit plays only in lambent flashes against a cloudy and murky background: here it is in bright sunshine. Such playful, and only half-sarcastic, strokes as it contains are aimed at his own profession, but with nothing of unkindliness. Yeoman Philemon alters in little more, when he becomes the parson, than the pudding sleeves and length of skirt that are added to his grazier's coat. His tone is just the same, although he prates now of tithes and dues instead of crops; and learns how to shake his head over his pipe, and read the news, with due professional orthodoxy of sentiment:—

> "Against Dissenters would repine,
> And stood up firm for Right Divine."

The writer of these lines, it is worth noticing, is no bigoted High Church Tory. So easily does the piece flow, so ready is its versification, so terse and telling its description, that we scarcely notice, in first reading, how many are the touches drawn from Swift's observation of the country villages through which he passed on his way between Holyhead and Leicester, Farnham and London. We have the homely pair: their kitchen with its furniture, its walls adorned with chapman's ballads, that after the transformation furnish out the quaint devices common on the walls of the country church. In half a dozen lines we have a complete picture of the parson over his pipe and newspaper, performing christenings and acting as the centre of the village gossip:

> "A shambling awkward gait he took,
> With a demure dejected look,
> Talkt of his offerings, tithes and dues,
> Could smoke and drink and read the news;
> Found his head filled with many a system,
> But classic authors—he ne'er mist 'em."

And lastly we have old Goodman Dobson, "of the Green," prating of the village story from noon to night, trotting off to

show to new-comers the twin Yew-trees, that served as indubitable proofs of its veraciousness, and gathering round him on Sunday, for weekly practice, a crowd of familiar auditors to hear the old tale repeated. The whole picture might be drawn from the life, as he saw it on the village green of some Surrey or Leicestershire village.

During the whole of 1706, and down to the late autumn of 1707, Swift remained in Ireland. In midsummer, 1706, John Temple, writing to Swift to consult him about his Irish estates, had invited him to Moor Park. Swift replies to the inquiries in a tone that shows how much he had already considered the evils of Ireland. He urges Temple to avoid rack rent: and goes on: "I forgot to tell you that no accounts from your tenants can be relied on. If they paid you but a peppercorn a year, they would be readier to ask abatement than to offer an advance. It is the universal maxim throughout the kingdom. I have known them fling up a lease, and next day give a fine to have it back again. It has not been known in the memory of man that an Irish tenant ever once spoke truth to his landlord." He turns aside, rather than refuses, the invitation.

"I am extremely obliged," he says, "by your kind invitation to Moor Park, which no time will make me forget and love less. If I love Ireland better than I did, it is because we are nearer related, for I am deeply allied to its poverty. My little revenue is sunk two parts in three, and the third in arrear. Therefore if I come to Moor Park, it must be on foot: but then comes another difficulty, that I carry double the flesh you saw about me at London, to which I have no manner of title, having neither purchased it by luxury, nor good humour. * * * Whig and Tory has spoiled all that was tolerable here, by mixing with private friendship and conversation, and ruining both; though it seems to me full as pertinent to quarrel about Copernicus and Ptolomee, as about my Lord Treasurer, and Lord Rochester; at least for any private man, and especially in our remote scene. I am sorry we begin to resemble England only in its defects. About seven years ago frogs were imported here, and thrive very well; and three years after, a certain great man brought over Whig and Tory, which suit the soil admirably."*

* Mr. Forster printed this letter, dated 15 June, 1706, for the first time.

Meanwhile these months, that Swift spent quietly in Ireland, were full, in the larger world, of great events. The session of Parliament which had closed so auspiciously for the Whigs in the spring of 1706, had been followed by a summer as full of success. In April Marlborough had set out for the Hague; before a month was gone he had added another, in Ramillies, to the now long list of victories which might have seemed to justify a war even less reasonable than that on which England was engaged.

Addresses of congratulation poured in from all sides; and on June 27, St. Paul's was the scene of another of the usual Thanksgivings. In September, a new disaster befell the French arms in the battle of Turin: and the campaign in Italy cost Louis not less than 20,000 men. Each new disaster to the enemy seemed to open new opportunities for turning the war into one of aggression, and for strengthening the Whig supremacy by opening up new vistas of national ambition. In October Louis found himself obliged to make overtures for peace: but they were coldly received: the reply was long delayed: and when it came, it proposed conditions which closed all prospects of a speedy end to the war.

When Parliament met, on the 3rd of December, the Ministry found themselves as yet confronted with hardly any opposition. Addresses from both Houses encouraged the war, in spite of murmurings that were now heard through the country. The Duke of Marlborough received lavish additions to his already long list of honours and rewards. Even in Convocation, the High Church opponents of the Ministry seemed to be hushed, and the Lower House assented, all but unanimously, to a Whiggish address which was drawn up by the Bishops. A display of the spoils of victory was made in procession to the Guildhall: supplies were liberally voted: and on the 31st of December (1706) Parliament adjourned for a short recess, leaving the Ministers on the full tide of apparent popularity.

But as the session went on, after the recess, signs of opposition began to arise. The Union with Scotland, pressed forward with feverish urgency, greatly stimulated that opposition. It was disliked because it seemed to involve an insult to the Church, to introduce a jarring chord into the constitution, to promise an influx of needy members to both houses, ready on payment of a bribe to be the henchmen of Ministers. The English mob was jealous, and stung to the quick by the coyness with which the poorer nation had met the advances of her wealthier sister. The Tories took up the cause of the Church, so threatened. A New Act for the Security of the English Church was passed, which, as a protest against the compact with Presbytery, gave a certain consistency to the Tory party; but this was the only effect of their struggle. In spite of all protests, the Union became law.

But new difficulties soon met the Ministers. The suspicions of the Church party became stronger; their alliance with the Tories became more close. Even in Ireland the same tendency prevailed. The Church of Ireland, which, at the beginning of Queen Anne's reign, had conceived new hopes, and had found itself, as it believed, triumphant over the Presbyterians, was now suspicious of the Government, and these suspicions became more decided when the Duke of Ormond gave place to Lord Pembroke, who in June, 1707, assumed the office of Lord Lieutenant.

Pembroke's antecedents gave sufficient indication of his political inclinations. He had fallen under the displeasure of the court in the halcyon days of Toryism under Charles II. In the Revolution he had taken a prominent part. He was the friend of Locke, and to him the Treatise on the Human Understanding had been dedicated, at a time when Locke's name was the foremost amongst the men whose views were more advanced than those which any political party dared to avow. He had held high office as a diplomat, and wide travel and liberal culture had left their imprint on him. From Italy he

had brought those choice antiques which began the glories of Wilton. Such a man was not likely to penetrate too deeply into Irish politics, or to trouble himself too much with the battles of the sects. But such part as he took was not likely to be adverse to the Whigs. He came avowedly to heal or gloze over difficulties which Swift and those who thought with him had no wish to minimise. But his easy bonhomie prevented differences of opinion from becoming too violent. He came to Ireland with even more than that usual display of courtly munificence by which the progress of the Viceroy to Dublin was always marked. He lavished bounties of more than two thousand pounds even on the English towns through which he passed.* The same munificence was repeated on his visits to the more remote districts of Ireland. Such displays, contemptuous rather than complimentary, satisfied the consciences of the English Governors of the country.

In his opening address to Parliament Pembroke followed the usual precedents of recent years. The Queen, he declared, "would be glad of any expedient for strengthening the interest of her Protestant subjects in Ireland." This was a well-understood formula, and was meant only to suggest the abolition of any Presbyterian disabilities. The Episcopalians refused to assist in this method of strengthening Protestantism: and Parliament was deaf to the invitation. Roman Catholic disabilities were increased: but those of the Presbyterians were not removed. His mission having failed, Pembroke closed the Parliament and went back to England in November, 1707.

In the train of the Viceroy, Swift returned to England. As with Lord Berkeley and the Duke of Ormond, so even in larger measure with Lord Pembroke, he had been on easy terms at the Castle. His life had run smoothly in the lively society of Dublin, where his Prebend of St. Patrick's and his footing at the Castle, caused him often to be, and

* See Delany's Observations, p. 212.

where, in spite of his grumblings, he found abundance of congenial friendship. The two brothers Ashe, one his tutor in old days at Trinity, and his adviser in more than one of the darker passages of his life, the other the blithe punster, Dilly Ashe, who will turn up again in Swift's more noted days: the Dean of St. Patrick's, Dr. Sterne, famous for his dinners, by whose promotion room was one day to be made for Swift; Sir Andrew Fountaine, who had come from Norfolk in the Lord Lieutenant's train, and whose close intimacy with Swift, begun at Wills', was now strengthened: these, with Dr. Raymond of Trim, the poor economist, but kindly friend, and Archdeacon Walls, the business adviser of Swift, formed the circle amongst whom Swift moved in these earlier Dublin days. Pembroke himself sought their company, and entered cordially into its amusements; amongst which not the least was their zealous rivalry in punning.* It was by a pun that Swift began his intimacy with the Viceroy himself; † and the "Castilian language" as Swift calls their elaborate tricks of orthography, became a favourite amusement of the little society that gathered round the inner circle of Pembroke's household.‡

* This punning proclivity is the first, amongst a number of similar methods of trifling, by which Swift relieved more serious thoughts. Compared with those that followed it, the dog-Latin and the perverted spelling of the correspondence with Sheridan, the practical joking which the gossips describe as belonging to his later Dublin days, and the rhymed and jesting fragments which indiscriminating tradition has preserved, the puns are almost dignified. But even as puns they are not often amusing. All these methods of trifling are in Swift's case too clearly the results of a strain perforce relaxed, to have real humour. Swift's vein of humour never becomes visible save when it works with something more than verbal quibbles and conceits. The latter are interesting only as giving us the biographical fact, that the strain of Swift's passion and the force of his clear intellect, relieved their tensity with little thought of dignity in relaxation.

† Swift had found Lord Pembroke undergoing a long lecture on what his lecturer called "the commonwealth of bees." "They are a very ancient nation," said Swift; "Moses numbered the *Hivites* amongst the nations Joshua was to conquer." Delany, Observations, p. 212.

‡ Specimens of this "Castilian" language are given in a MS. dialogue by Swift, which Mr. Forster found at Narford, and some passages of which

When he left Ireland with the Viceroy in November, 1707, he bade farewell to the easiest period of his life.

With this return to England, Swift begins what is a long, and for him, an eventful visit. Political affairs were at a critical turn when he arrived. Pembroke had been brought back to join the naval council of Prince George of Denmark, whose growing infirmities were aggravated by the anxieties about the Navy, whose nominal head he was. On this and on other points, the Ministry were finding it hard to resist attacks. Parliament had now been sitting for a month. An attack upon the Ministers was opened, which proceeded upon the topics of the decay of trade, the failure of English arms in Spain, and, above all, the neglect of the fleet. This time not Haversham only murmured in his spleen, and Rochester and Nottingham in the fury of their Tory zeal. For once, Wharton and Somers were on the same side. The Whigs were no longer to be temporized with. Either the Ministers must throw them over, or must proclaim clearly, in the face of the world, their alliance with the Whigs, and their breach with the Tories. They were forced to choose the latter. The Whig Junta was the master of the situation.

Swift came, on a commission from Archbishop King, to wage for his Church the battle for the First Fruits and the Twentieth parts of the Church benefices—a battle that cost for some years much labour, and earned but little thanks. If secured at all, these could be gained, as they had been for England, only by political favour. It was Swift's business, therefore, to watch the complexion of politics, and to learn how he might make the best terms for his Church. On his way to London, he stops, as usual, to visit his mother at Leicester: and writing * to Archbishop King from Leicester on

he has reproduced. They illustrate the easy and careless talk that whiled away hours at the Castle. But they reflect Swift's humour only at its worst: and could be of little interest save to those who from familiarity caught the hints they were meant to convey.

* The letter was printed, for the first time, by Mr. Forster, from the Records of Armagh.

the 6th of December, 1707, he tells him something of the prevailing political feeling as he finds it there. Rents may be slack in coming in: but "this long war has here occasioned no fall of lands nor much poverty among any sort of people": and, "there is a universal love of the present Government, and few animosities except upon elections," of which he happened to see one on his arrival. It only serves as a text for his usual contemptuous complaint of party. "The parties," he says here, "are as usual—High and Low: there is not a chambermaid, prentice, or school-boy in the town, but what is warmly engaged on one side or the other."

Swift made his application, as a Whig, to what was now a Whig Government. The business of his Church moved but ill. He had little power to act, and was ill backed up by others, upon whom, as he thought, a heavier obligation lay. But the increasing influence of his friends of the past, Lord Somers and Lord Halifax, seems to be on the point of gaining some very tangible advantage for Swift himself. In January $170\frac{8}{7}$, the Bishopric of Waterford was vacant: and his claims were urged, or were believed by Swift to have been urged, upon the Government, by Lord Somers,* whose voice, at this juncture, it was hardly possible for the Government to disregard. Never, even in the time of his highest influence, did Swift come nearer, in his own belief, to one of the prizes in the Church. In a letter to Archdeacon Walls† of January 22, he speaks with unquestionable bitterness of the appointment that has been made, of a certain Dr. Thomas Milles. "I once," he admits, "had a glimpse that things would have gone otherwise. But now I must retire to my morals, and pretend to be wholly without ambition, and to resign with patience."

* This is made perfectly clear by the letters from Swift to Lord Halifax of June 13th, and Nov. 13, 1709, which were first printed (one with a wrong date) in Cunningham's Edition of Johnson's Lives of the Poets, Vol. iii., p. 201. See also Forster's Life of Swift, p. 211.

† Amongst Mr. Murray's MSS., but printed almost entirely by Mr. Forster.

His hopes were dispelled; * but he could still look to Lord Somers as his friend: he still refused to surrender all belief in the flimsy promises of Lord Halifax: and it was certain that if these two had the will, their power to help him was increasing. Before many months were gone, Somers was to become Lord President: and in the next year, Swift seeks, through Lord Halifax, to obtain from Lord Somers, as Lord President, the aid for his claims to the see of Cork, which he believed that he had for his claims to that of Waterford when Lord Somers was the unrecognised, although real, master of the Government.†

If that Government still hesitated about the expediency of avowing Whig principles and striking an alliance with the Whig leaders, circumstances soon decided them. Vague rumours of an attempt of the Pretender, which were realized and dissipated, at the same moment, in March, $170\frac{8}{7}$, were abroad some months before. On the 11th of February, Robert Harley, who had joined the Government only recently as Secretary of State, and one of whose clerks had just before been involved in a charge of treasonable correspondence with France, was dismissed.‡ The dismissal was in reality a retri-

* "The Court and the Archbishop of Canterbury," he writes, "were strongly engaged for another person (*i.e.* himself) not much suspected in Ireland." *Swift to Archbishop King.* Feb. 5, $170\frac{8}{7}$.

† Letter to Lord Halifax, Nov. 13, 1709. Dr. South, Bishop of Cork, was then ill of a spotted fever. But he did not die till 1716.

‡ The attempt to involve Harley in the guilt of this obscure and petty traitor, William Greg, was a spiteful and unworthy piece of malice. Greg's story illustrates clearly enough the hap-hazard method of conducting public business which prevailed. He had been employed in various capacities: and his work, like his pay, was casual and irregular. He was in debt, anxious to make money, and careless how he made it. From Greg's own account we see how correspondence of the most confidential sort was patched up late at night, at an hour when Harley, as a rule, was drunk: and how the bad French of the secretary's letters was corrected by this needy and ill-paid clerk. Harley at the most was careless: poor Greg seems to have shown as much honesty as could fairly be expected: and if anything did leak out, it was due to carelessness and to the rotten system. Swift afterwards wrote a defence of Harley against the charge.

bution for a hazardous game that Harley had played. Already he had arranged that compact with Mrs. Masham which, two years later, was to produce events so full of consequence. The compact had miscarried for the present. But, as Swift wrote to King, "though his project has miscarried, it is reckoned the greatest piece of court skill that has been acted these many years."* Harcourt and Henry St. John followed Harley: a new recruit, destined to rise to greater things, was attached in Robert Walpole; and when the year 1708 had fairly begun, the Government was purged of any remnant of Toryism.† The change strengthened the Ministry, and the elections in April (1708) were again in their favour. Murmurings, no doubt, were heard. Writing to Archdeacon Walls on January 22, $170\frac{8}{7}$, ‡ Swift had so far changed since his letter in December to Archbishop King as to say, "the people begin to be heartily weary of the war;" and similar symptoms were to be seen elsewhere. But the summer campaign brought a new success in Oudenarde: and the murmurers were silenced for the time.

Swift had, meanwhile, been doing what he could for himself and for his Church. When he had come up to London from Leicester in the beginning of the year, he had joined his friend, Sir Andrew Fountaine, in his house at Leicester Fields, and through him Swift hoped to gain, with more ease, Lord Pembroke's aid for the application of his Church. But it soon appeared that this was to be bought only at the cost of concession to the Presbyterians in Ireland in the matter of the Test. Swift would listen to no such bargain.

* Swift to Archbishop King, Feb. 12, $170\frac{8}{9}$.

† Swift's own correspondence, clearly based on good authority, shows us how narrow the turn of affairs was. Harley was satisfied that he had gained the day, and that Godolphin was going. It was only when the Duke of Somerset, at the Council, refused to sit with Harley, that the Queen yielded and dismissed him. It is curious that it was the same Duke of Somerset whose sudden appearance in the Council was largely instrumental in procuring the fall of St. John, in 1714.

‡ MS. belonging to Mr. Murray.

Five years before, he had written to Tisdall, speaking with nothing but contempt of the Nonconformists' schemes, as too futile to be worth opposing. But his relation to them had now become more marked. He saw more clearly the danger of their claims, and the increasing support which these claims found from the Government. He never hesitated as to his attitude in the face of this new danger. In the Irish convocation he had been the chief opponent of any repeal of the Test. His friend and diocesan, Archbishop King, was equally decided. Swift would counsel no bargaining away of privileges for money: but he might still hope that the bargain would prove unnecessary. Sooner than others, he saw the weak points of the Whig oligarchy. Schemes, like that of Harley, might not miscarry again. The Whigs might go to lengths which would alienate from them many of their own party.* Swift continued to press his application on behalf of the Church: and to do so, not, indeed, as the opponent of the Ministry, but yet with full determination not to pay for the countenance of the Ministers, by ignoble surrender of her privileges.

But much of his attention as was absorbed with knotty questions of politics, and with struggles into which he was gradually being drawn, Swift found time for other thoughts. He renewed his former intimacy with Addison, now Under-Secretary in Lord Sunderland's office, and drawing the reward of well-timed eulogy in a comfortable official salary.† In literature, too, Swift was not quite idle. One of the few pieces that he wrote was that on the "Tritical Faculties of the

* "If they carry things too far I shall go to Vienna or even to Laracor, rather than fall in with them."—*Swift to Walls*, Nov. 9, 1708. Mr. Murray's MS.

† Delany tells a story of the two which is characteristic enough, and which interests us the more that it must have been related by Swift to Delany in far later days. They happened to discuss their tastes on scriptural characters: and it was with some shame at the suspicions that it might have inspired in a listener, of a mutual flattery, that they blushed to find themselves praising, Addison the name of Jonathan, Swift that of Joseph.—*Delany's Observations*, p. 33.

Mind," a playful parody of the would-be erudite and philosophical treatises that traded on trite quotations, and in their profundity lost all thread of sequence. Nonsense never wore, on first sight, a dress apparently so reasonable and so profound.

With his friends, in Ireland, he all this while maintained a correspondence in which lesser matters were mingled with affairs of Church and State. Sterne, the Dean of St. Patrick's, was at this time Swift's intimate friend, and with him was carried on a correspondence that was half friendly, half official. The Deanery had been the centre of a generous hospitality, marked even amongst the hospitalities of Dublin: and Swift follows with interest the building operations on which its present master was now engaged, and which were to result in that rambling mansion in time to be occupied by Swift himself. He will have nothing to do with the upholstering: but on the garden he wishes to give his advice, as a subject with which he is conversant, and he begs that the Dean will wait for his return before arranging his plans. Laracor had made him an adept in the art.* But civilities like these are only excuses for graver hints. The Test has to be supported and efforts for its repeal have to be resisted. Sterne must organize that resistance. The bishops are too selfish to do anything for the Church: and the stubborn and inert dulness of the Irish clergy, blind to the opportunity and thinking only of the present, must be aroused to some sense of danger. Others are active enough: it must be the Church's task to keep the government in the right path.

The wheels of his mission drave heavily. For him, as for other suitors, the alarm of the French invasion had been made an excuse for delay. With difficulty, by the intercession of Lord Sunderland, the keenest and most truculent of Whigs, and of Lord Somers, now the chief support of the Ministry, he obtained access to the Lord Treasurer, Godolphin.† From

* *Swift to Dean Sterne*, April 15, 1708.

† In June, 1708 (see Swift's Letter to Archbishop King, June 10, 1708).

this first meeting, Swift's antipathy to Godolphin would seem to date. Looking at the two men, we can hardly wonder at it. The dull and pompous dignity, the pervading mediocrity of Godolphin were as vinegar to Swift. From the first he saw through those empty platitudes; the impression of which is carried down to our own day by the insipid features that look out at us from Godolphin's portraits. The antipathy would be as strong on Godolphin's side. In the ordinary courtly phrases that cloak unwillingness to act, he expressed himself to Swift as wanting power, as only passive in the matter: the real power, he urged, lay with the Lord Lieutenant, to whom, if Swift pleased, he would repeat what Swift had said. This was doubly offensive to Swift: it meant nothing, and was a palpable pushing aside of his request. But it also hinted more: that Swift was come from Ireland unbefriended and unauthorised, with no means of access to that Lord Lieutenant, whose intimate boon companion he had been. Swift answered that he was well known to his Excellency, and that his present object was only to secure the Lord Treasurer's good will: that, indeed, any mention of the matter to Lord Pembroke, might place him in the awkward position of appearing to slight that lord.

Driven thus into a corner, Godolphin was compelled to speak to the question. He did it with what was, for him, more than usual plainness. He might advise, so he told Swift, the granting of the First Fruits, if only he were sure that proper acknowledgment was to be made. What that acknowledgment was, Swift could very well understand, but Godolphin would not more fully explain. It clearly meant the giving up of the Test, and the swallowing of all Whig principles entire by the clergy of Ireland. Such an acknowledgment Swift neither could nor would give: and thus the interview ended.

Swift's disgust at the delay, the pompousness, the enigmatic utterances of the Lord Treasurer, was not lessened when he found himself deceived either by Godolphin or by Pembroke.

The deceits of Ministers may sometimes serve useful purposes of their own: they always give food for laughter to those whom they believe their dupes. Pembroke told Swift that he, and he only, was in charge of the matter under the Queen: Godolphin now told him that *he* had the papers and that the matter had long been before *him*. Between the two, Swift could only wait and indulge his contempt, in suspense: and do what he could to save his Church from the odium of a suspected Toryism, without allowing her to drift into adopting all the maxims of the Whiggish creed.

At times the point seemed to be gained. Swift was made to believe that the First Fruits and Twentieth parts were actually granted, and he informed the Archbishop of the fact. When the hottest months came on and London emptied, all the world waiting for the result of the siege of Lille, that was to decide the future of the war, Swift went with the world into the country. For six weeks he was absent in Kent,* and then returned for a few days to town before going to the fashionable resort of Epsom, where the Court went to drink the waters. On the evening he came to town from Kent, the news of Prince George's death on the 28th of October (1708) greeted him. The changes that followed, contributed largely to the new attitude which Swift soon assumed, and to the new energy with which he now applied himself, after these years of doubt and hesitation, to defend the views he held.

* He writes on the 20th of October, to Ambrose Philips, whose feeble verse and facile time-serving had not yet disgusted Swift, to say how pleased he is to hear of Philips' arrival, and how he hopes soon to join him in town. The letter was first printed by Nichols in his *Illustrations of Literature* (iv. 730).

CHAPTER VI.

SWIFT'S VIEWS ON CHURCH AND STATE MATURED.

October, 1708—June, 1709.

ÆTAT. 41.

Swift waiting for the issue of the struggle—Results of the death of Prince George — Changes in the Ministry — Wharton as Lord Lieutenant — A scandal refuted—Swift drawing further from the Whigs—The question of the Test in Ireland—The *Letter on the Sacramental Test*—The change in Swift's views—"In suspense"—Failure of his mission—Leaves London in disgust—Last visit to his mother—Back in Ireland—Other Literary work of the year—*Argument against Abolishing Christianity*—Its scope and meaning—*Project for the Advancement of Religion*—Its biographical importance—*The Sentiments of a Church of England-Man*—The principles it upholds—Swift on Despotism and Anarchy—His conception of Liberty—The humorous work of the year—*The Predictions for* 1708—The jokes on Partridge and their sequels—Bickerstaff on his defence—Bickerstaff in the *Tatler*—The *Apology for the Tale of a Tub*—Social incidents of his English visit—The circle of his friends—His picture by Jervas, in his prime.

In the last chapter we saw Swift watching the shifting phases of the political struggle, and, as he watched, standing purposely aloof from all active interference. Meanwhile he cultivates the literary friendships that he had already formed, fills his leisure with the careless exercise of his lighter humour, or, passing to Laracor, busies himself with the quiet occupations that his garden and his canal afforded. Already Swift felt himself to be out of joint with the Whig party. Soon he ceased to wait for the issue of the party struggle. The period of suspense was ending: that of active interference was near at hand.

The death of Prince George of Denmark, which Swift learned on returning from his visit to the country, in October, 1708, was an epoch in the party struggle. It left the poor Queen, the only pathos in whose life is her utter loneliness,

without the one tie which had at least apparent sincerity in it. Brainless, dull, and incompetent as he was, the Prince had at least more motive to be true to her interest than the crowd of hungry cormorants whose effusive adulation only thinly cloaked the speculations in which they discounted the results of her death. But sad as the loss was for her, it was a gain to the ministers. It checked complaints about the naval administration. It gave places for new Whig adherents. Lord Pembroke was brought to the Admiralty, leaving room for Lord Somers as Lord President, and for Lord Wharton, as Governor of Ireland. No appointments could have marked more conclusively the Whig alliance of the ministers. Pembroke, says Swift, had need of all his philosophy to console him for these changes: "he takes all things mighty well," says Swift, "and we pun together as usual; and he either makes the best use, or the best appearance with his philosophy of any man I ever knew." * To Swift, already disliking Wharton, and, as it seems, distrusting Somers, the changes really involved a new, and distasteful, ministry.†

* *Swift to Dean Sterne*, Nov. 30, 1708.

† Swift had not yet conceived the bitter intensity of hatred for Wharton of which he has left the proof in words that burn still: but that he had suspicions, is perfectly clear, (see especially his letter to Archbishop King of Nov. 30th, 1708.) That letter has been strangely misinterpreted. From beginning to end it is clearly written in a spirit of strong antagonism to the Presbyterians, and of equally strong suspicion of the inclinations of the ministers to help the Presbyterians. In a previous letter, the Archbishop had advised Swift to come over with Wharton. Swift here speaks of the chaplaincy, and the manner in which it has been filled up: adding "Your friend (*i.e.* Swift himself) made no application, for reasons left you to guess." He then speaks of "an affair at Drogheda, which is made a handle." Scott in a note explains this as referring to "some disputes in corporation affairs." In reality it referred to a complaint of some trifling hardship suffered by a Presbyterian minister (see Scott, VIII. 353). "I hope you are prepared," Swift goes on, "to take off the sacramental test, because that will be a means to have it taken off here;" a sarcastic reference to what he deemed an ill tendency, likely to spread. Further on he speaks with evident irony of the "moderation," which Swift held to be wanton carelessness, of Wharton's secretary, who would go to church or meeting-house, indifferently. Scott quotes a note, in which Luson

But a story has been told of his relations to Wharton, which involves a charge of baseness and ingratitude against Swift. That he detested Wharton most cordially is clear: but could it be asserted with truth that Swift poured out all the bitterness of his satire only because Wharton refused to him a post for which he supplicated, we should have to shape Swift's character anew. Yet Dr. Salter of Charter-house long after published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, a story, supported by letters which he asserted himself to have seen, to the effect that Swift had turned upon Wharton, because Wharton refused to make him chaplain at Lord Somers's intercession. He had seen, he says, Lord Somers's letters: he had seen Swift's original application and his letter of thanks for Somers's intercession: and finally he could vouch for Wharton's reply to the intercession, in the words: "My Lord, we must not prefer these fellows: we have not character enough ourselves."

It might be enough to say that Salter himself appears to have been a man from whom common accuracy was not to be expected.* But fortunately, in this instance his falsity is proved. To begin with, Swift's first prejudice against Wharton was conceived at his earliest interview, shortly before the Earl went to Ireland—an interview that had been sought, only in order that Swift might lay before the Viceroy his application on behalf of the Irish Church.† Next, Swift distinctly denies, in a private letter, (written without the least thought of meeting this scandal, which was not started till after his own death,) that he made any application at all for the chaplaincy.‡

had expressed his surprise that Swift should have praised a Whig, and corrects it by saying that Swift now called himself a Whig. But in truth there is no praise, but only irony in the paragraph. Swift still tried to believe himself a Whig: but his detestation of the Church principles of the Whigs was becoming each day more strong.

* He is called by Bishop Percy "a very shallow coxcomb:" "a poor prattler," one whose character was sufficiently known to command little respect.

† See *Memoirs relating to the Change in the Queen's Ministry in* 1710: Scott, iii. 189. See also *Swift to Archbishop King*, 26 March, 1709.

‡ *Swift to Archbishop King*, 30 Nov. 1708.

Thirdly, he tells us himself of a letter from Lord Somers to Lord Wharton on his behalf: but he also tells us the fate of that letter. It was first of all refused by Swift: when left by Lord Somers at Swift's lodgings, it was not given by him to Lord Wharton before his departure from London: and when it was finally delivered in Dublin, Swift "immediately withdrew," as if to show that he desired to reap no advantage from it.* During the autumn of the next year, he continued to keep at a distance from the vice-regal court, although on good terms with Addison, Wharton's secretary.† Finally he writes to Lord Halifax, in November, 1709,‡ recalling with gratitude Lord Somers's previous countenance, and trusting it may continue, but shewing no such impatience as would argue disappointment and distrust; nor referring in any way whatever to an affair the impression of which would have been fresh in his mind had it ever happened as reported.

The calumny is of a type common in the life of Swift. Its only real foundation lay in the facts, that some friends had suggested to him the chaplaincy: that Lord Somers had possibly asked it for him, though against Swift's will: that Swift had thanked Somers for previous kindness: and that he turned, soon after, with bitter anger upon Wharton. For each of these facts there is the clearest explanation: but it has pleased slanderers of Swift to seize upon any plausible opportunity to satisfy their ill-will, by accusing him of acts the most unlike his character. Even slander, they forget, must have a certain appropriateness in its falsehoods, if it is not to be self-condemned. Intense as it was, Swift's bitterness was never paltry.

But while Swift's sarcasm had no such ignoble origin, it is certain that Lord Wharton was the first to stir the full bitter-

* *Memoirs relating to the Change*, &c. (Scott, iii. 190.)

† *Ibidem.* See also *Letter from Addison to Swift*, written in the autumn of 1709. (Scott, XV. 347.)

‡ The letter was first printed in Cunningham's edition of the "Lives of the Poets" (1854), vol. iii., p. 202.

ness of his anger, and that his feeling towards Wharton hastened his breach with the Whigs. There were two motives now impelling him to this. He was angry that no progress was made with his petition for the First Fruits: and he was afraid that the Whigs were seeking to confer favours on the Presbyterians, by the abolition of the Test. The former annoyed him partly on account of the slight laid upon himself; the latter, solely because of the evil it would do to his Church. The Irish Dissenters were straining every nerve to undo the Act of 1703. The friends of the Church were anxious lest they might be successful. Swift was resolute against any yielding up of the principle of a Test; and to this position he continued steadfast throughout his life. But he was still unprepared to break completely with the Whigs. So little is he inclined to any inconsistency of the kind, that he feels it needful, not to protest the fidelity of his political allegiance, but rather to represent to his friends that his attachment to the Whig party will never betray him into any abandonment of the privileges of the Church.*

Partly with the view of getting rid of the perplexities gathering round him, he turns his thoughts in a direction whimsical enough. Lord Berkeley is going as Envoy to Vienna, and Swift thinks of accepting his offer of the Secretaryship of the Legation. Anything—even Laracor—was better than to continue to be mixed up with the action of the Whigs, if they "carried things too far." † To go to Vienna would give him breathing time. He would have the comfortable provision of two guineas a day: and he might wait for the ripening of events and the prospect of advancement in the Church without loss of principle. Lord Berkeley's embassy, however, was abandoned, and Swift never set out on a mission

* "No prospect of making my fortune, shall ever prevail on me to go against what becomes a man of conscience and truth, and an entire friend to the established Church." Plainly, Swift expected to be classed as a Whig. *Swift to Archbishop King*, Nov. 9, 1708.

† *Swift to Archdeacon Walls*, Nov. 9, 1708 (Mr. Murray's MS.)

which might have given so strangely different a colour to his life.

But at home, he was rendered every day more uneasy by the evident intentions of the Government: and in the month of December 1708, (while still in London,) he wrote the *Letter on the Sacramental Test*, in the character of an Irish member of Parliament, dating from Dublin. It was one of a series of tracts, which help us to appreciate Swift's position at this time. Brought out with all his usual solicitude to conceal the authorship, the tract was readily enough recognised as his.* There was no mistaking its terms. It was a clear challenge to those who wished to abolish the Test: a clear appeal to logic against toleration: a clear renunciation of party allegiance, if such a sacrifice of principle as the abandonment of the Test were demanded by that allegiance.

It is useless to deny that Swift's views had undergone a certain change from the day when he wrote to Tisdall † that it was not worth while to struggle with the Presbyterians: from the day when he began to write a pamphlet against the Bill which proposed to forbid Occasional Conformity,‡ and quoted Somers and Burnet, as authorities whose support of such conformity proved it to be advantageous for the Church.§ But it is grossly unjust to accuse Swift of any lack of principle in making the change. In the first place he now saw the Pres-

* In his letter to Archbishop King, of 6th January, 170⅘, Swift makes an effort, it may be half-humorous, to disclaim the authorship, by speaking of the tract as one of which "some parts are very well, others puerile, and some facts, as I am informed, wrong represented." The author, he says, has reflected upon Swift himself, as unfavourable to the Test. It is just possible that this may have been in the page which Morphew omitted in the edition of 1711, and which cannot now be discovered. But it is more likely to be merely a *ruse* on the part of Swift. It did not deceive the Archbishop. In his letter to Swift of 10th February, he agrees with Swift's judgment concerning the tract — perhaps a little maliciously. But he goes on: "You need not be concerned: I will engage you will lose nothing by that paper." His belief as to the author could not well be more clearly expressed.

† *Swift to Tisdall.* Feb. 3, 170⅘.

‡ *Ibidem.*

§ *Swift to Tisdall.* Dec. 16, 1703.

byterians, vastly increased in power and in pretensions. Next, he found, or fancied that he found, the Whig party buying a political advantage by the bait of toleration to the Presbyterian dissenters. With the advance of Presbyterianism, he saw its adherents renewing their old intolerance, which none, who remembered the history of the Rebellion, could altogether forget.* The negociations for the Union with Scotland, negociations which Swift, like many others, watched with extreme distrust, shewed that where Presbytery was strong it might be intolerant as ever. Swift was irritated, too, that toleration should be forced down the throats of an unwilling Irish Parliament, to suit the exigencies of an English party. Lastly, Swift knew that toleration in the mouth of the orthodox Whig, was a sham and a delusion; that it reached out to no logical conclusion; that it could be answered, as he answered it, by turning its own inferences against itself: that it was, in short, nothing but a party manœuvre, which sought in the ranks of dissent an ally against Tory hopes.

The Tract shows us what it was that tended to separate Swift from his Whig friends. It shews us also what was to be Swift's peculiar strength in controversy. Political treatises of the day varied from truculence to dulness. Here was one that threw around the details of technical politics the vigorous persuasiveness of humour. A new power had arisen in political controversy. The poetical satires of Dryden had lit up the arena with a meteoric flash; but Swift, to a humour more keen

* "I have been so very idle as to read above fifty pamphlets, written by as many Presbyterian divines, loudly disclaiming this idol Toleration, some of them calling it (I know not how properly) a Rag of Popery, and all agreeing it was to establish iniquity by Law. Now I would be glad to know when and where their successors have renounced this doctrine, and before what witnesses. Because methinks I should be loath to see my poor titular Bishop *in partibus* seized on by mistake in the dark for a Jesuit, or be forced myself to keep a chaplain disguised like my butler, and to steal to prayers in a back room, as my grandfather used in those times when the Church of England was malignant." *A Letter concerning the Sacramental Test.* The "grandfather" is not merely a literary fiction.

than that of Dryden, to a style in its own way as trenchant as his, added the regulated skill of logical fence. From first to last there is not a sentence that does not tell: and yet there is not a sentence that is not absolutely direct and simple. The side touches are brought in, with admirable skill, not only to strengthen the argument, but also to point to other issues on which the writer wishes to shew his thoughts, and to make suggestions which he leaves to do their work in the reader's mind. Thus the question of the Test leads him, almost by accident, to treat of the relation between Ireland and England: and in a single sentence of grave irony, he shews what he feels. The abolition of the Test, he says, as an Irishman addressing the English, may no doubt be for your advantage. If so, he is ready to exclaim in the words of Cowley to his mistress,

> "Forbid it, Heaven, my life should be
> Weighed with her least conveniency!"

If it be so, as we are ready to give our vitals to poultice a scratch on your finger, we must needs contribute, even by our ruin, to the advantage, ever so trifling, of our superiors. Only suffer us to believe that it is not absolutely for our own good: if we are to be your victims, vouchsafe us the unenvied consolation of martyrdom.

Uneasy in his political relations, Swift had other troubles. He was vexed by his old enemies of giddiness and deafness. His memorandum books, during this winter of 1708-9, are filled with agonised references to these tortures.* All the year, he tells us, he was in England; and in another corner of the notebook, he has jotted down the words "In suspense."

He foresaw nothing but ill from Wharton's lord-lieutenancy;

* Thus: "Nov. From 6th to 16th, often giddy. God help me. * * * Dec. 5th. Horrible sick. 12th. Much better, thank God and M. D.'s prayers. 16th. Bad fit at Mrs. Barton's. 24th. Better: but dread a fit. * * * Jan. 21st. An ill fit: but not to excess. 29th. Out of order. * * * March. Headache frequent," and so on. The malady was clearly increasing.

but matters had seemed to mend a little, when Addison as secretary, had assured Swift that no violent attempts were to be made upon the Test. The love between these two was now as strong as ever: and Swift recommends Addison most warmly to Archbishop King.* Both Swift and King seem to feel that the agitation against the Test had blown over. But in March of this year (170$\frac{9}{10}$) just before the new Viceroy went over, and when the Whigs were in the full tide of triumph, Swift's severance from them is made more imminent by his finding that he had been befooled and deceived as to the First Fruits: and that, after having believed that the grant had actually been made, he had trusted to nothing better than a courtier's promise.†

Swift was irritated to the last degree. He despised the clumsy duplicity that aped the ways of statecraft, and he was indignant at the implied insult to himself. But he still refrained from an outward or complete break with those by whom he had been misled. When Wharton set out, along with Addison, for Dublin, in the month of April (1709), Swift parted from them on apparently fair terms.‡ When Addison reached Chester, he found there a letter from Swift, which had overtaken him on the way, and which, as he said, "formed his only entertainment in that place."§ It offered some new introduction, which might help to make Addison's stay at Dublin more pleasant, and might prevent any wide division between his friends and those of Swift.

Swift stayed on for a month longer in London. On the day before his departure, (the 3rd of May,) he called on the Whig Mæcenas, Halifax: and a slight but characteristic incident of the visit is recorded. Halifax never pleased Swift;

* *Swift to Archbishop King.* January 6th, 170$\frac{9}{10}$.

† *Swift to Archbishop King.* March 26th, 1709.

‡ In the previous month (March 24) Swift writes to Archbishop Marsh "by the command of the Lord Lieutenant." Clearly there was then no open breach between Wharton and Swift, whatever their feelings.

§ *Addison to Swift.* April 22nd, 1709.

something in the dapper self-satisfaction of the man repelled him no less than his insincerity. A little French book was lying on Halifax's table:* Swift begged it as a gift. It was given; and Swift desired Halifax to remember that "it was the only favour he ever received from him or his party." On the back of a letter of unmeaning compliment which Swift, six months afterwards, received from Halifax, he wrote, in the bitterness of spirit that fast grew on him, "I kept this letter as a true original of courtiers and court promises."

Swift then quitted London, never to renew the same relations with those amongst whom he had hitherto moved. He set out first for Leicester, to pay what was to be his last visit to his mother, to whom he had clung with an affection so close, in spite of their years of separation. Of their intercourse in these later years we know little, save by the records of Swift's regular pilgrimages to his mother's house, and their constant interchange of letters, carefully noted in his memorandum books. By the help of these memorandum books, which preserve with peculiar vividness, though in fragmentary shape, the minute details of his life during certain periods, we can trace the very route of this journey. Starting from London on Thursday, the 3rd of May, he passes (probably going on horseback) by St. Albans, Dunstable, Newport, Northampton, and Harborough to Leicester. He lingers there for five weeks: and then starts by way of Burton-on-the-Hill, and Nantwich, for Chester, arriving there on the 14th of June. When he reached the coast he waited for an opportunity to cross. Addison, now in office at Dublin, seems to have secured for him a passage in the Vice-regal yacht;† and Swift landed at Ringsend on the 30th of June. Without staying to greet his friends, or even Esther Johnson, who was now in Dublin, he hastened to bury himself at Laracor. Before this the society at the Castle had attracted him; now he was clearly

* The book was *Poésies Chrétiennes de Mons. Jollivet.*

† *Addison to Swift.* June 25th, 1709.

anxious to mark how little he had in common with it; and even Stella's presence in Dublin, could not keep him near it.

The close of this visit of twenty months to England, gives us an opportunity of reviewing the literary work on which he was then engaged, and the new incidents of his life in the society of London. Critical as it was in determining his political attitude, this period was also a turning point in his literary career and in the growth of his influence over men.

Those of Swift's pamphlets which belong to this year, 1708, all reflect one and the same state of mind. That in which he dealt with the question of the Sacramental Test in Ireland, we have already considered. Side by side with this, there are three others; the *Argument against Abolishing Christianity*, the *Project for the Advancement of Religion*, and the *Sentiments of a Church of England-Man.** The first is a masterpiece of his own peculiar humour, of which the others present scarcely a trace: but yet they all give evidence of the same views of religion and of politics. They tell us much of Swift's conception of religion, as a factor in society: a conception clear, definite, and masculine, if neither very elevated in speculation, nor very profound in devotion. It is the conception of a politician much more than of a divine. His formal creed touched only the surface of the real religious feeling that underlay, and gave meaning to, his cynicism, no less than his tenderness. But he held that formal creed with what we may call a stern rigidity, and with no mere semblance of belief. He permitted himself no deviation from it, and such deviation he regarded in others as an impulse of anarchy, a will-o'-the-wisp of vain philosophy, or the hair-brained presumption of fools. Religion may have other and wider domains:

* The full titles are:—*An Argument to prove that the Abolishing of Christianity in England may, as things now stand, be attended with some inconveniencies, and perhaps not produce those many good effects, proposed thereby: A Project for the Advancement of Religion, and Reformation of Manners, by a person of Quality:* and *The Sentiments of a Church of England-Man, with Respect to Religion and Government*

he is concerned with it only as an instrument to tame the unruly, as a code which gives its sanction to morals, as a dogma which discourages the flimsy pretences of originality, and as a system that sets a limit to the pursuit of the unprofitable jargon of philosophy. In the *Tale of a Tub* he had given a loose rein to his humour in the treatment of religion: in the *Project for the Advancement of Religion* he deals with it as a system of police. Finding the subtlety of his humour misinterpreted, he is resolved to write so that the most prosaic could have no pretext for misinterpreting what he said.

It is curious, as supporting the view that Swift's separation from the Whigs was a gradual process, begun before he recognised it, and depending upon no personal or selfish motive, that, in after days, he looked back upon these tracts as bolts aimed at the government of the day. He then felt as if the opinions they expressed, had been out of harmony with the pronounced aims of Godolphin's ministry. But so far was this from being the case, that Swift was then reckoned, by others and by himself, as a Whig: and read apart from the light which his later life throws on them, the tracts have no party bias against the Whigs, unless the spirit of defiance shewn on behalf of his own order, were to be so interpreted.

The *Argument against Abolishing Christianity* has an interest far beyond that of any passing controversy. The sweep of its irony is as strong, as unrelenting, as unvarying, as that of a whirlwind. There is no fitful gust, no lapse into fretfulness or anger, no break in the perfection of the assumed tone of apology, and of judicial expostulation. But the apparent lightness of touch only thinly disguises the seriousness of the sarcasm. At the outset he ventures, with a semblance of timidity, to assert his dissent from the general consensus of opinion in favour of abolishing Christianity. But it is with the hesitation and modesty befitting one who holds a paradox so scandalous: and as if afraid of his own assertion, he hastens to guard against misinterpretation, by disclaiming any idea so

insane as that of defending *real* Christianity, such as may at any time have produced an effect on men's belief and actions. This, indeed, is proper only for an uncivilized age: but its dangers, he thinks, are only so many arguments in favour of maintaining the conventional fiction that now prevails. If men are not allowed a God to revile and renounce, they may be tempted "to reflect upon the Ministry." That any real belief could be propagated by accepting the fiction, ought not to be asserted: it is a reflection upon the wisdom of the nation. The financial aspect of the question is doubtless an important one, but not so clearly decisive of the matter as would seem. No doubt it costs a good deal to maintain ten thousand parsons, and a score of bishops: but these parsons have their uses: their diet is moderate enough to let them breed a healthy progeny: and it may be well not to let the tainted wits and men of fashion reduce the world to one great hospital. Nor would these revenues suffice to keep a hundred gentlemen of fashion, as "easy" in their circumstances (for this is the cant phrase) as they must needs be on any fair calculation. The offer of such scanty support might even offend their dignity. As for the argument that one day in seven is lost by the practice of Christianity, this is paltry cavil. Sunday serves excellently for a dose of physic: the wits need not make the course of their life different on that day: and churches, even should they resort to them, serve the purposes of assignations, rather better than any other places that could be named.

But a stronger objection to Christianity remains behind. Religion gives rise to sect and party: and sect and party are certainly inconvenient. By all means, he is ready to admit, abolish Christianity if you will thereby destroy sects. But can you do so? Is there nothing in human nature that would produce sects, even though Christianity had never been heard of? If we abolish its name, can we be sure that the plague will disappear? If there was no word for lying, would men be

truthful? If diseases had no names, would men be sound? Will you satisfy dissenters, if you throw down the walls, and let them enter at their own sweet will? Swift's answer tells much of his judgment on his fellow men.

"To all this I answer: that there is one darling inclination of mankind, which usually affects to be a retainer to religion, though she be neither its parent, its godmother, nor its friend: I mean the spirit of opposition, that lived long before Christianity, and can easily subsist without it. Let us, for instance examine, wherein the opposition of sectaries among us consists: we shall find Christianity to have no share in it at all. Does the Gospel anywhere prescribe a starched squeezed countenance, a stiff, formal gait, a singularity of manners and habit, or any affected forms and modes of speech, different from the reasonable part of mankind? Yet, if Christianity did not lend its name, to stand in the gap, and to employ or divert these humours, they must of necessity be spent in contraventions of the laws of the land, and disturbance of the public peace. There is a portion of enthusiasm assigned to every nature, which, if it hath not proper objects to work on, will burst out and set all into a flame. If the quiet of a state can be bought by only flinging men a few ceremonies to devour, it is a purchase no wise man would refuse."

On the whole, he believes that he has ground for hesitating to accept the ordinary belief in the expediency of abolishing Christianity. "Whatever," he goes on, "some may think of the great advantages to trade of this favourite scheme, I do very much apprehend, that in six months' time, after the Act is passed for the extirpation of the Gospel, the Bank and East India Stock may fall at least one per cent. And since that is fifty times more than ever the wisdom of our age thought fit to venture for the preservation of Christianity, there is no reason we should be at so great a loss, merely for the sake of destroying it."

Is the sarcasm here chiefly against the sceptic who would sweep away Christianity? Or is it against the conventional artificialities that pass for religion? Or is it against the essential shallowness of human nature that makes these artificialities all that we can compass? It would be hard to say: perhaps Swift himself scarcely knew which thought was

uppermost. But the strength of his assault, whatever was its chief object, comes from the rigid tenacity of his creed. He made his service to his Church that of a soldier to his country,* and refused to look behind an order. The post was his to defend: and sarcasm was the weapon in his hands wherewith to guard it.

The *Project for the Advancement of Religion*, if it has less general interest, is of even more biographical importance. It is written in the character of a "Person of Quality,"† and is dedicated to Lady Berkeley, the wife of Swift's patron, for whose behoof the *Meditation on a Broom Stick* had been written a few years before. For the first time Swift is, so far as we can tell, didactic and nothing else: but his didactic manner is unique. It is hard to say whether there is some lurking sarcasm, or whether the tract is written simply as it professes to be, to convey gravely a proposal for social reformation. We have no right to assume a sarcastic reference when none is even hinted at: but, on the other hand, we can scarcely avoid detecting some irony in its grave propounding of superficial

* "The want of belief is a defect which ought to be concealed, when it cannot be overcome." "I look upon myself, in the capacity of a clergyman, to be one appointed by Providence for defending a post assigned me." *Thoughts on Religion.* Scott's 2nd Edition, Vol. VIII., p. 55.

† There is a special interest in what Steele says of it in the Tatler, dating on April 20th, 1709, from Wills' Coffee-house. "This week being sacred to holy things, and no public diversions allowed, there has been taken notice of even here, a little Treatise, called 'A Project for the Advancement of Religion: dedicated to the Countess of Berkeley.' The title was so uncommon, and promised so peculiar a way of thinking, that every man here has read it, and as many as have done so, have approved it. It is written with the spirit of one who has seen the world enough to undervalue it with good-breeding. The author must certainly be a man of wisdom as well as piety, and have spent much time in the exercise of both. The real causes of the decay of the interest of religion are set forth in a clear and lively manner, without unseasonable passions; and the whole air of the book, as to the language, the sentiments and the reasonings, shews it was written by one whose virtue sits easy about him, and to whom vice is thoroughly contemptible. It was said by one of this company, alluding to that knowledge of the world the author seems to have, the man writes much like a gentleman, and goes to Heaven with a very good mien."

remedies for sores that have eaten deep into the flesh. Virtue, according to his proposal, is to be propped up by religion: and both are to be ensured by a sort of habit, by a forced obedience to convention. Open disregard of morality is to be discouraged by social penalties, and so men are to become virtuous, by virtue becoming fashionable. Neglect of ordinances is to be punished, and so men are to become religious, by constraint. No one but Swift could have written in such a strain without degenerating into cant, or wearing his cynicism on his sleeve. Swift does neither. He clearly felt then, as he felt all his life long, that men were to be driven, not led: that they must be bidden to assume a virtue, if they had it not, and that to argue or speculate upon the grounds and motives of morality, was a waste of time. He lays bare, with an almost callous deliberation, the cankers of society—the abuses of the magistrature, the perversions of justice, the dishonesty of trade, the rascality of lawyers, the defects of education, and the vices of fashion. But having done so, he makes no perfervid appeal to higher principles. Obey rule and convention, be orderly, avoid giving scandal—this is the duty of the members of society: to enforce this, the duty of the civil magistrate. This is the lesson, he seems to say, which it is most expedient to teach: this the ideal, he seems to feel, which, poor as it may be, is the highest you can attain.

The tract obtained what was ever the foremost aim of Swift, the attention of his own day. Men of the world paused to listen to one who was felt, in the words of Steele, "to write like a gentleman, and to go to Heaven with a very good mien." Swift knew that religion would never prevail by the cant of a false humility, or by a forced and technical style of its own, that proclaimed its alienation from ordinary humanity. With set purpose, then, he relinquished such tricks.

This and the *Letter on the Sacramental Test* are both more or less contentious. Directed against certain abuses in society, and certain errors in politics, they have the bold cut and

slash of political polemics, even though they professedly spoke for no party at the moment. In the third of these pamphlets of 1708, that on *The Sentiments of a Church of England-Man with respect to Religion and Government*, there is a judicial air scarcely to be paralleled in any other of Swift's works. It avowedly takes the same view of the religious question as that adopted in the *Project for the Advancement of Religion*. In the one as in the other, Swift spends little care or thought over the details of a creed, the spiritual conditions it produces, the emotions it excites, or the speculations upon which it rests. He is concerned only with its effect upon the conduct of the individual: with its place as a factor in society. In regard to religion he is perfectly definite. Dissenters are to have toleration, but toleration is not to be supposed to involve equality. He refuses to discuss the question of the abstract truth or falsehood of this or that creed; such a question would be foreign to his conception of the principle at stake. The expediency of State maintenance of religion was, as Swift knew, scarcely disputed by any in his day. But it was to be justified in principle only on the ground of the public welfare: and if the creed which the state maintained, were not worthy of such preference as would exclude dissent, this justification vanished. Comprehension he treats as impossible: it would, as he shews, simply imply a re-casting of the national creed at each of the new departures of dissent. Such an argument rests upon foundations which would not now be currently accepted: but it is unquestionably logical so far as it goes. Its logic, however, discards all sympathy, either with religion, or with the speculations by which religion may be affected: and treats of it only as a matter of state policy and nothing else.*

* Swift did not, of course, professedly admit the principle that the Christian religion was a system of police, with whose abstract truth we were not concerned. He simply refused to discuss it, holding it as proved, for all practical purposes. He distinctly renounces, elsewhere, "the atheistical notion, that religion is only a contrivance of politicians for keeping the vulgar in awe." (*Examiner*, No. XXIX.) But his rigid refusal to

But while Swift maintains thus rigidly the privileges of his church, his creed involves no divine right in a hierarchy, admits, indeed, no other basis for it than expediency alone. So it is with state government. He exposes with admirable skill the fallacies upon which notions of divine right, and absolute prerogative, and the so-called sovereign power, are based.* He shews that Hobbes, in his defence of absolutism, was merely misled by terms: that in claiming supremacy for the sovereign power, he was only asserting what was inherent in the very name: but that he erred in identifying with the name the executive power vested in the monarch, rather than the legislative power which is properly supreme. He defends the theory of the Revolution, as implying the right of resistance, and shews that no theory can be invented for it, which can divest it of its real meaning of a re-grant of authority from the people. To us this may seem a truism: but in maintaining it we must not forget that Swift was defending what was, in his days, a hotly attacked position. He exposes the absurdity of passive obedience: and unquestionably, so far, at least, as civil affairs are concerned, he dreads the non-resistance theories of the Tories, even more than the possible extravagances of the Whigs. Anarchy is better, he says, than despotism: "as much as a savage is a happier state of life than a slave at the oar."†

But the pamphlet also makes clear—and this is no slight indication of Swift's attitude to his fellow men—what it was that he understood by liberty. He was one of those to whom a real liberty, which outward forms may help or may destroy, but which they never can create, was the very breath of life. For this alone, Swift strove: but, more than once, as he struggled

tolerate argument on the question, brought him nearer to the latter position than he would himself have been ready to admit.

* Fallacies which, as we shall find, he opposes with equal decision long afterwards, when he had passed through the ordeal of being a sworn confederate of Toryism.

† The inaccuracy of expression here is characteristic of Swift's prose. Terse and expressive as it is, it is often technically and grammatically incorrect.

for it, he fancied that he was struggling for popular liberty, with its strangely different aims. The objects and desires of that popular liberty, he, in his heart, despised. What he sought for, was a freedom of compelling assent to his own opinion, as implicit as he felt that his intellectual superiority deserved. The religion of the state could not really force Swift to limit the range of his own thought: but he had forced himself to recognise a dogmatic creed as expedient, and thus steeled himself against showing any tolerance for others' doubts. If their betters were not galled by dogma, dissenters could not expect the state to submit its creed to their judgment, though exercised in the name of liberty. It is much the same in the domain of civil government. In spite of his avowed dislike of tyranny, there are possible dangers in the Revolution against which he would guard. The sovereign, he says, must not place himself at the mercy of one political party. To do so would be to allow to faction too much power. But as, year by year, it became more evident that this was just what the Revolution had made inevitable, so Swift's sympathies, unconsciously to himself, took, with greater definiteness, an opposite course. He abhorred the power of an oligarchical faction, in his heart, far more than the arbitrary despotism of a monarch, which was already a thing of the past. Yet he still spoke of himself as resisting tyranny, when what he really resisted was the predominant success of the Whigs, with their sophisms and insincerities, with their specious pretences to be the defenders of the liberty, that, in the sense in which Swift understood the word, they really destroyed.*

From these pamphlets, with their more serious bearing on the life of Swift, it is a relief to turn to a happier flight of his humour. In January or February of $170\frac{8}{7}$ he wrote his "*Predictions for the year* 1708." The occasion has been often

* This tract, expressive as it is of Swift's views in 1708, should be compared with the Letter to Pope, written when he was looking back over a large part of his political career, in 1720. See chap. XIII.

told. John Partridge was a shoemaker who had practised successfully on the superstitions of the time, and had attained some notoriety, from the days of Charles II. down to those of Anne. He seems to have joined together the trades of quack, of extortioner, and of "philomath," which was the name by which he and his *confrères* imposed upon the vulgar. He was now the publisher of the *Merlinus Liberatus*, and had contrived to gain some notoriety, apparently even beyond the shores of England. Swift may have been irritated by the quackery of mountebanks such as Partridge: but more probably he merely saw in the popular superstition an opportunity for a stroke of humour. With the most demure gravity, he issued Predictions for the ensuing year, in the name of Isaac Bickerstaff, a surname he was said to have taken from a blacksmith's sign. He has no intention of discrediting astrology; but desires only to expose the absurdities of the pretended astrologers who have degraded the science as Partridge has done. They were vague and timid, and uttered prophecies which any turn of events could equally explain: but Bickerstaff is bold in the minuteness and detail of his information, giving the public, however, only an instalment of his lucubrations, and keeping others, —so deep is his sense of political responsibility—in reserve. He is not too positive. Like a wise prophet, he knows there are limits to his science, and that though the stars affect the inclination of men, their influence must at times yield to reason. He will not, therefore, assert too positively that his prophecies may not be subject to modifications, but in the main he will submit them to the speedy test of actual events. The first prophecy, he says, is indeed trifling enough: it relates merely to Partridge the almanac-maker. "I have," says Bickerstaff, "consulted the stars of his nativity by my own rules, and find he will infallibly die upon the 29th of March next, about eleven at night, of a raging fever: therefore I advise him to consider of it, and settle his affairs in time."

This "trifle" is, of course, the central point of the piece:

but Partridge finds himself in good company. The archbishop of Paris is to die on the 4th of April: the Dauphin is to die of strangury on the 7th of May; and Louis XIV. himself, is to die at six in the evening of the 29th of July. The stock of prophecies is liberal enough: and it is left for time to determine what is their truth.

It is hard to conceive how any one can have failed to detect the jest: but as a fact it was accepted in good faith. Swift followed it up forthwith by a *Letter to a Person of Honour*, in which Partridge's death on the 29th of March is described. His repentance is most edifying. He feels his end near, and "repents his fooleries from the very bottom of his heart." He explains, in the sincerity of a death-bed confession, how his almanac was constructed. He did it only because "he had no other way to gain his bread, and mending old shoes was a poor livelihood." He is troubled by the thought that he may have hurt even more by his quack physic, than by his false astrology.

The jest was now fully started: and it was carried on by other hands than Swift's, aided by the strange credulity that accepted Bickerstaff as real. The Inquisition in Portugal ordered his book to be burned. The Stationers' Hall struck the dead Partridge from their rolls: and Partridge himself was furious, not at the travesty of his own predictions, but at the mistaken prophecies of Bickerstaff. Bickerstaff became the favourite of the town: and the most amusing contribution to the current topic was the answer published in Partridge's name under the title of "Squire Bickerstaff detected." This was written most probably by Thomas Yalden,* with the assist-

* The Rev. Thomas Yalden was a fellow of Magdalen College, where he had as friends Addison and Sacheverell. A story seems to have been set on foot at Oxford, of some plagiarisms he had committed, from Congreve's poems: so he may also have been indebted to him for assistance in his prose. Yalden was afterwards involved for a time in the suspicion of being connected with Atterbury's plot. His chief distinction is his appearance in Johnson's Lives of the Poets.

ance of Congreve, and possibly also of Nicholas Rowe. It is, in fact, no answer at all, but an indignant protest against the sufferings to which the hapless philomath has been subjected. He hears the bell tolling for him: the undertaker calls to arrange for the hangings: the sexton wants to know whether his grave is to be plain or bricked. His best friends expostulate with him on his unneighbourly conduct in keeping his death a secret even to them: and tell him that it looks a little like disaffection to the church. It is indecent, they urge, that he should be frightening people at his window, when he ought to have been in his coffin these three hours. Worse and worse, when he ventures out, it is only to be dunned by the sexton and the undertaker for the expenses of his burial, or to be stared at, as a ghost. The Parish Clerk, "discreet and sober" as he is, has sent two or three times, and begged him to come and be buried decently, or else to produce a certificate of burial elsewhere, as the Act requires.

The jest might even now have died out, had not the veritable Partridge revived it, by his almanac for 1709. There he insisted on the denial of his death, with some vehemence: and decried the pretensions of the new claimant to astrological lore. This gave Swift another opportunity. Isaac Bickerstaff now wrote a tract in his own vindication, in his usual style of grave and moderate expostulation. Mr. Partridge might at least, he thinks, have been more civil in his language, when the point on which they differed was a merely speculative one. The cause of true philosophy is injured by such treatment: it has shocked the susceptibilities of the learned abroad. He has indeed been contradicted by a Frenchman. But can he be expected to stoop to vindicate himself against a Frenchman, a Papist, and an enemy? As for Mr. Partridge's denial of his own death, it is against all proof. A thousand readers of his almanac declare "that no man alive ever writ such damned stuff." Partridge's wife has herself said that he has "neither life nor soul." If an ill-informed carcase still

walks about, and calls itself Partridge, is that Mr. Bickerstaff's fault? Partridge declares that he is alive now, and was so on the 29th of March. But surely this is cavilling: it implies that he need not have been living all through the interval: and that he was not so living is all that Bickerstaff said.

He cannot, out of regard to himself, refrain from a complaint of the Letter to the Person of Honour, that told of Partridge's death. Bickerstaff is there said to have made a mistake of four whole hours. He is sorry to have to refer to the matter: he would not willingly have thought about it further: but after careful inquiry he finds he was wrong, at the most, by half-an-hour. He hopes this need raise no clamour: but that the author will in future be a little more tender of other men's reputation as well as his own.

Thus ended the jest, so far as Swift and his friends were concerned, save for a short broadsheet which he issued in 1709, with a pretended black-letter prophecy of Merlin. Partridge was bewildered; but however ignorant Partridge continued to be, Swift's authorship was well known to his friends. Bickerstaff became his recognised title: and it was appropriated by Steele, with Swift's full permission, in order to make the fortune of the new venture on which Steele was now starting, in the *Tatler*.* From April, 1709, till January, 1710, the lucubrations of Isaac Bickerstaff kept the attention of the town. Swift aided his friend, sometimes with hints, sometimes with actual contributions: and when he issued the first volume, Steele acknowledged the help he had received from the borrowing of the name. In closing the whole series, Steele again referred, and this time by name, to Swift, to whose "uncommon way of thinking" and to the "peculiar turn of whose conversation"

* "It happened very luckily that a little before I had resolved upon this design, a gentleman had written predictions and two or three pieces in my name, which had rendered it famous through all parts of Europe; and by an inimitable spirit and humour, raised it to as high a pitch of reputation as it could possibly arrive at." Dedication to first volume of the *Tatler*. Steele was rash enough soon to call down that humour on himself.

he was so much indebted.* It is by such casual words of description as these, that we can appreciate the sort of estimate which Swift's humour extorted from his contemporaries.

Just before he quitted England, Swift was occupied with another literary episode. The *Tale of a Tub* had already run through four editions: and a fifth was about to be issued by Tooke. It did not actually appear till 1710, but the *Apology* which was published in it, for the first time, is dated June, 1709. Swift allows the immaturity and possible rashness of his work. But he will not allow that it was irreverent: he will not allow that his treatment of religion is objectionable to any for whose judgment he cares. He dwells on his defence with something of iteration. He even condescends to explain allusions, and to interpret his irony. He shows that free ridicule of false pretensions is no new thing in dealing with religion: that it had been the express object, amongst others, of the author † of the letter on Enthusiasm, which had attracted so much notice on its appearance in 1708.

To those who have attacked it, he shews, generally, the leniency of contempt. They are, he says, with necessary consciousness of his own genius, "like annuals that grow about a young tree, and seem to vie with it for a summer, but fall and die with the leaves in autumn, and are never heard of more." The horse-play of William King,‡ the civilian, who had written some rough remarks on the Tale, did not prevent Swift's later kindliness to the author; and the attempt moves him only to a mild expostulation with King, for having "writ against the

* Preface to fourth volume of the *Tatler*.

† The third Earl of Shaftesbury. His authorship was still anonymous: and Swift curiously enough ascribes the Letter, which in the *Apology* he says he never read, to his friend Colonel Hunter, the Governor of Virginia. *Swift to Colonel Hunter.* Jan. 12, $170\frac{8}{9}$.

‡ This is the second of the trio of William Kings, who come across Swift's path. He was an easy and somewhat slipshod wit, who had joined the Christ Church faction in the Boyle and Bentley controversy, and who was afterwards joined with Swift in the *Examiner*, and profited by his patronage when in need. We shall come across him again.

conviction of his own talent, and entered upon one of the wrongest attempts in nature, to turn into ridicule, by a week's labour, a work which had cost so much time, and met with so much success in ridiculing others." To Wotton,* his more erudite opponent, he is ready to pardon his invective: his comments have, says Swift with quiet irony, done much service in elucidation.

We have lingered over his political relations and his literary occupations, during a period so critical. But his social life also, stands out, side by side with this, in much vividness of detail. Early in his own visit, Esther Johnson had come with Rebecca Dingley for some months to London.† It was the last time that she visited England, and we know of her visit only by Swift's casual reference to it in a letter to Archdeacon Walls, on the 22nd of January, $170\frac{8}{7}$,‡ and again in a letter to Dean Sterne,§ where he speaks of Stella's dog Pug, and his escapades when they took him to Greenwich Park. Addison, Steele, Congreve, Rowe, and Prior, were all amongst his friends; Lord Berkeley and his family were in the immediate neighbourhood of London, in their classic home at Cranford.‖ Anthony Henley of the Grange vouchsafed his friendship; and Halifax, once the fellow-worker, now the patron, of literary men, attempted, as we have seen, without much success, to make Swift succumb to his influence, and pay incense at his

* See above, Chap. IV.

† This visit was unnoticed by Swift's biographers, until Mr. Forster brought it to light, by means of Mr. Murray's MSS.

‡ Mr. Murray's MSS. "The ladies of St. Mary's," he writes to Walls, "are well, and talk of going to Ireland in spring. But Mrs. Johnson cannot make a pun, if she might have the weight of it in gold."

§ *Swift to Dean Sterne.* April 15, 1708.

‖ Scott prints a letter from Lord Berkeley to Swift, inviting him to Cranford, and urging him to give a copy of a work he had just completed to the Archbishop of York for presentation to the Queen. It is curious that Scott, who rightly conjectures the book to have been the *Project for the Advancement of Religion*, did not see that the date of 1705 for the letter was obviously wrong. Forster (p. 213) shows that it ought to have been 1708.

shrine. Colonel Hunter, now in Paris, but named as Governor of Virginia, was, when absent, a constant correspondent of Swift, and, when in London, a member of the same circle. In a jesting way, when the hopes of the Vienna secretaryship were disappearing, Swift talks of becoming Hunter's Bishop in his government of Virginia.

Already, during this visit, we come across the name of Mrs. Vanhomrigh, the fashionable widow of a Dutch merchant, whose fortune had been made in Dublin. It is noted frequently in Swift's memorandum book amongst those of his partners at ombre and picquet. Mistress Barton, too, the niece of Sir Isaac Newton, was amongst those who submitted, with due respect and humility, to the tyranny of his friendship: and Mistress Long, the reigning Whig toast at the Kit-cat club, of whose fate we shall hear more, was another of his lady friends, who claimed at first special exemption from the rules which he dictatorially imposed, that "advances should be made to him by all the ladies who claimed his acquaintance;" but who was compelled, after due hearing of her cause before Mrs. Vanhomrigh's son, to subscribe to a treaty of submission.*

These same note-books give us other little characteristic traits. The memory of his former poverty taught him to be scrupulously careful in the records of his expenses. The items of his small gains and losses over the picquet table; the cost of his board and lodging: every little incidental payment—are all noted from week to week. Narrow as was his income, he spent less still: and his total outgoings for a quarter, seldom exceed £30. He keeps a careful record of his correspondents — Archbishop King, Dr. Ashe of Clogher, Mistress Johnson, Mistress Dingley, Raymond of Trim, Dean Sterne, and Archbishop Marsh: Addison, Fountaine, and Steele —all these appear, most of them frequently, in the list. We can

* Swift states his claim in a letter to Miss Hoadley (June 4, 1734), and in one to the Duchess of Queensberry (Nov. 19, 1730). The decree of Mistress Long's submission was printed in a stray volume, published in 1719, containing "Letters found in the cabinet of Mrs. Anne Long."

trace him even to Ranelagh Gardens; and to the opera, where, like the *Spectator* three years later, he went with a protest against what he deemed a fashionable folly of the day.* "We are nine times madder after operas than ever," he writes to Hunter: and not long after,† he tells him that he designs to set up a party among the wits to run them down next winter, if true English caprice does not save him the trouble by a speedier change of taste.

It was during this visit of 1708 that he sat to Jervas, then the newest fashionable painter, for the portrait which gives us what is clearly the best picture of him in his prime.‡ In later years cynicism, enduring sadness, and increasing disease wore away the sprightliness of aspect that belonged to him: and as the Dictator of St. Patrick's, he bore a look that is disagreeable in its overstrained haughtiness—a look which in a lesser man one would have been inclined even to call one of insolence. In the Deanery at St. Patrick's, and at Howth Castle, there are portraits of Swift, taken long after this, when the Drapier bore dictatorial sway in Dublin: § and in both of these we see the domineering sneer with which he accepted the incense of a nation whose applause he despised even while he courted it. The brightness, the keen eye of the ready combatant, the freedom of the humourist, all are gone; and we see instead a man whose hopes are dead, to whom life has

* In the mixed jargon of English and Italian which then disfigured the operatic stage, there must have been much incitement to ridicule. Swift's lines

> "Strange! all this difference should be,
> 'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee"

were written on the rival pretensions of Handel and Bononcini. In the *Argument against Abolishing Christianity* he suggests that parties in favour of Margarita and of Valentia might form very good substitutes for religious sects.

† *Swift to Colonel Hunter.* March 22, 170$\frac{8}{9}$.

‡ This is the picture now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, where it fitly hangs beside that of Prior, and opposite to the pictures of Pope and Samuel Butler. It was presented to the University by Alderman Barber in 1739. See *Scott's Swift*, XIX. 191.

§ They seem to have been both from the same original by Bindon, taken for Lord Howth in 1735. *Scott's Swift*, XVIII. 343.

yielded chiefly the withered leaves of cynicism, and who, with a sort of studied carelessness, accepts the power that has fallen to his lot, in a sphere beyond whose narrow confines he had once borne sway. There is another picture,* which appears in Lord Orrery's Remarks, which is clearly one of Swift in his later days, just before he entered on the dark valley that for him preceded death. In it we see the anguish, the loneliness, the despair of one who sounded depths in human nature that he feels would have been better unexplored, and who stands gazing, as it were, into a future which is overcast by dread of coming ill. Another portrait is one taken from a cast after death, when that later placidity which, we are told, belonged to his appearance in the second infancy of old age,† had passed away, and there remained only the distorted wreck that partial paralysis, preceding death, had left.‡

It is in the picture by Jervas, however, painted during this visit, that we see Swift in his prime, and it is clearly from this aspect of him that Roubiliac modelled the later bust which has been reproduced as the frontispiece to this book. The first characteristic of the face is its keen and nervous force. The features are large and finely formed, with an unusual fulness of curve in lip and chin and nostril. Nowhere in the face is there repose. The eye, even in spite of the heavy eyebrow, is prominent, and its look, as it struck contemporaries, could change at will from the sweetness and archness of azure blue, which it wore to Pope, into something black and threatening that struck the gazer dumb—as Vanessa knew. The lurking corners of the mouth tell of humour, subtle, lively, quick: only there is lacking the calm that gives to humour time to germinate, the light that shines from the inner recess where

* Drawn by B. Wilson and reproduced in 1751, from an etching, in Orrery's Remarks.

† By Mrs. Pendarves in her Autobiography.

‡ The picture is reproduced in the worthless compilation, with the title of "*Swiftiana*," which Wilson produced nearly sixty years after Swift's death. It appears also in the first volume of Nichols' edition of the works.

creation takes body and shape, and that inspires the dramatist or poet. But now he was in the full flush of strength. He had proved his metal in controversy: he had scaled heights of humour untouched before: he had made himself felt as a power in the state. Material rewards might be withheld from him, but the disappointment seemed rather to put him on his mettle. It pleased Swift to fancy that his passions were calm, and that he was proof against emotion. If it was really so, it would only mean that strong intellectual antagonisms deadened the sense of the emotions that accompanied them, and forced him into a repression of these emotions, that was fatal to his peace. No one can look at the portrait of Swift in his prime, to the almost exuberant fulness of curve, and to the nervous energy which lightens up the features, without feeling that passions and emotions are there. But passion, chained and contemned, and done to death, was forced to throw itself into the whirl of ceaseless intellectual fight.

There is little in the portrait, as there was little probably that attracted the attention of Swift's ordinary acquaintance, to tell of the ravages of disease. Those ravages were already present, but as yet they were only intermittent. Outwardly indeed, Swift's health was good. He had a powerful, even a muscular, physique. The stories of his walks, of his constant violent exercise, of his coolness and intrepidity when threatened with personal violence, prove that his estimate of his own strength was not mistaken, though, by a fatal error, it drove him to a regimen that encouraged the disease. In all his ailments, his only idea of a cure seems to have been to drive out some superabundant energy by forcing himself to over-strained physical exercise. He lived hard, in the sense that he drew largely on his strength, and seemed ever to be striving to tame his energies into exhaustion, rather than to conserve and regulate them into useful servants. But as yet the dire effects of such self-torture were not visible: and Swift was, as his portrait shows him, a man in the prime of life, and in the

vigour of an almost superabundant strength; knowing his own powers, and yet without the bitterness of those later antipathies that perhaps gave concentration to these powers, but also warped and narrowed them, checking the free flow of that gracious kindliness that endeared him to a circle such as gathered at Wills' or at the St. James's coffee-house, in these earlier years.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FALL OF THE WHIGS.

June, 1709—September, 1710.

ÆTAT. 42.

Swift at Laracor—Thoughts of promotion—The position of the Government—Pressure of the War—Sacheverell's sermon—His previous career—The offending topics—Godolphin as Volpone—Sacheverell's impeachment—Feelings of the nation—The trial—Unpopularity of the Government—Marlborough's demand to be made Captain-General for life—The Duchess of Marlborough and the Queen—The Whigs losing ground—Swift at Laracor—The attack upon the Test—His tract against the Government, on the election of Irish Speaker—His mother's death—Correspondence with Tooke—Dismissal of Sunderland—The Whigs in despair—Godolphin's fall—Swift's return, to find a "new world," in September.

SWIFT had come back to his quiet home at Laracor, at Midsummer, 1709, to watch political events for a while longer, from a distance. But however keenly larger political questions moved him, Swift was never guilty of the insincerity of affecting disregard for his own interests. Much as he suspected them, he had not relinquished all hope from the patronage of the Whigs; and from Ireland he sent two letters to the Whig Mæcenas, Halifax, to remind him of his promises, and to suggest means whereby Halifax might, if he pleased, be useful. "Pray, my Lord," he adds in the postscript to the first,* "desire Dr. South to die about the fall of the leaf, for he has a prebend of Westminster, which will make me your

* That of June 13, 1709. Both this and the letter to Halifax which followed in November, were first printed by Cunningham in his edition of the *Lives of the Poets*, 3, 201 : but he has mistaken the date of the June letter, which he has printed with the date of January.

neighbour, and a sinecure in the country, both in the Queen's gift, which my friends have often told me would fit me extremely: and forgive me one word which I know not what extorts from me; that if my Lord President (Somers) would in such a juncture think me worth laying any worth of his credit, you cannot think me persuaded that it would be a very easy matter to compass: and I have some sort of pretence, since the late king promised me a prebend of Westminster, when I petitioned him in pursuance of a recommendation I had from Sir William Temple."* He follows up the application again in November: and "if the gentle winter will not carry off Dr. South," he hopes his Lordship may move the Lord President, "to think on him for the Bishopric of Cork." There is something of a forced tone of compliment in both the letters, as if the application were made under a strain. The fact that it failed left Swift all the more free in his future choice of party.

The last cord that bound him to the Whigs seemed well-nigh broken when he parted from Addison. Addison stayed on till September, and then left with Lord Wharton for England. In the interval, he and Swift had seen much of one another.† It was then that Stella made his acquaintance, and discerned with a woman's quickness, that bland humouring even of what

* Mr. Fowle, the present incumbent of Islip, Oxfordshire, enables me to trace the "sinecure" which Swift coveted, as that of Islip, which was apparently the only benefice held by South. The present rectory house was built by South: and had he not outlived the period of Swift's influence either with Whig or Tory Ministers, it might have been Islip, instead of Laracor or St. Patrick's, that we should have associated with his name. The Drapier would never have been heard of: but Oxford could hardly have failed to feel the influence of such a neighbour as Swift.

† The house now attached to the Botanical Garden of Glasnevin, is said to have been occupied by Addison, and by his biographer Tickell, whom we shall meet later on as one of Swift's Irish friends and correspondents. In the Botanic Gardens there is a walk of ancient yew trees which is still known as "Addison's Walk." The neighbourhood is rich in associations with Swift and his friends, including not only Addison and Tickell, but Parnell, the Bishop of Clogher, Dr. Delany, and Dr. Helsham. Of the house of the two latter, afterwards built at Delville, we shall hear more hereafter.

he deemed absurdities, that power of "assenting with civil leer," by which Addison preserved in all companies the serenity of an unruffled temper and avoided the pain of controversy.* Such a trait was hardly one in which he could find sympathy from Swift: but difference of temperament never weakened, even amid estrangement, their mutual respect; and the pitfall of political dissension had, for the present at least, been avoided.†

Meanwhile, in England politics were changing rapidly. Louis's overtures for peace had been met only by new demands. The French King appealed to his people in his famous letter to the Prelates of France and the Governors of Provinces. The French nation was roused: and a new lease of life was ensured to the war.

Success in the war, however, was not now so conspicuous. Its burden was more distinctly felt. Prices rose: scarcity was spreading. Orders in Council and prosecutions of the "forestallers and engrossers" of corn, were not sufficient to stem the evil. When the ministers met Parliament in November, 1709, there was already much inarticulate discontent: and they soon increased it by their own rashness and persistency in error. To what follows Swift, in later days at least, ascribed their fall.‡

* "She was never positive in arguing," says Swift in his Character of Esther Johnson: "when she saw any of the company very warm in a wrong opinion, she was more inclined to confirm them in it than oppose them:" and he hazards the guess that she may have got the habit "from the same practice which she much liked in Mr. Addison."

† There is a letter written by Swift to Ambrose Philips on Oct. 30, 1709, which tells us something of his feelings at this time. He is cultivating half an acre of Irish bog: and reckoning "no man thoroughly miserable unless he be condemned to live in Ireland." "Yet I have not the spleen," he adds, "for I was not born to it." "You have," he goes on, "the best friend in the world, Mr. Addison, who is never at ease while any men of worth are not so; and Mr. Steele is *alter ab illo* (another of his sort)."

‡ The whole tenor of the *Four Last Years of the Queen*, and of the *Change in the Queen's Ministry*, proves this. But even earlier, Swift (*Journal*,

Just ten days before the opening of Parliament, on the 5th of November, a sermon had been preached before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen at St. Paul's, which, for no merit of its own, was to attract an attention and to work results, allotted to few productions of its class. The preacher was Dr. Sacheverell, of St. Saviour's, Southwark, to whom a good voice and a fine presence, with the most extreme of High Church doctrine, had already brought some notoriety. One sermon he had preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, on the 11th of September, 1707, upon the guilt and danger of presumptuous sins, in a style sometimes smart, but always vulgar, coarse, and tawdry, and often as regardless of grammar as of sense; trusting for attraction to that constant political reference which pleased the taste of the day. Speaking of hypocrisy, he cannot refrain from specifying a type of it, in "that quintessence of fanaticism, occasional conformity." It was a form of presumptuous sin against which few of his audience stood in need of warning.*

Another sermon was preached by him in August of this year (1709), at the opening of the assizes at Derby. His vigour of style had rapidly increased, along with the directness of his political allusions. The subject was the "Communication of Sin:" and the sin whose contagion is most clearly depicted, is that of Dissent. "The execrable miscreants Arius and Socinus," he tells his audience, "rotten in their graves, still stink above the ground, and live again in a hellish transmigration of their damnable heresies." He calls up for judgment "the atheistical monsters Hobbes and Spinoza, side by side

August 24, 1711) acknowledged how much the Tory ministers owed to Sacheverell, unwilling as they were to admit it.

* It seems strange that a University audience could have been pleased with a style which sought strength by touches such as this: "Old men, emerit in the Devil's service, left impotent and vanquished by wine and women, strive after vice with their decayed and rotten constitutions." Yet sentences even worse, which can hardly be quoted even in secular pages, are frequent. This fact, as shewing the taste—or the leniency—of the day, must not be forgotten in judging of what to us is coarse in Swift's style.

with the illiterate and scandalous wretch Fox, with his diabolical Inspiration; and the two or three Jesuits in masquerade, who crept into a conventicle, and rose in a few years to grasp the crown and upset Church and State." The same hands, his audience were warned, were now at work.

But the sermon now under notice, and by far the most important in its fruits, is the one preached on the 5th of November, which was printed at the request of the Lord Mayor.* It bore the title of "*The Perils of False Brethren both in Church and State*," and was avowedly a party manifesto. Without actually impugning the Revolution, he strips off from it, so far as may be, all notion of resistance. He shows how the doctrine of Non-resistance has been implicitly affirmed by all the great authorities of the Church. He points to what he conceives to be the end and aim of all these schemes of toleration, linked as they are with figments of original contract, in "a wild negative idea of a national Church:" a "heterogeneous incorporating mixture:" "a pious idea of making our house of prayer a den of thieves." Those dissenters, who had persecuted the Church, who had enjoyed their day of triumph, and who now had fallen, were anxious to slip in by a back door.

All this was a rough and reckless statement of the case; but we must see what was set forth by Sacheverell, if we are to judge how a change soon came over the spirit of the nation, and how that change had the sympathy of Swift. Neither he nor any moderate men sympathised with exaggerations like those of Sacheverell. But the High Church party had other and abler exponents than the preacher of St. Saviour's. It was gaining in its hold upon the nation, and in order to secure a majority, it had only to prove that the real and vital privileges of the Church were in danger. Swift might condemn the whims of such as Sacheverell in England

* The court of aldermen refused to concur in the Lord Mayor's request. But the sermon had been printed before their refusal was known.

and Higgins in Ireland, but this did not make him blind to dangers which gave force to Sacheverell's rhodomontade.

Even before the government took any action, Sacheverell's sermon raised a ferment. The preacher was answered, argued with, denounced, and libelled. Some of the replies exposed his faulty logic, his halting grammar, and his gross vulgarity. But others thought it needful to accuse him of flagrant vice. In the *Modern Fanatic* he was made the mark for the vilest scurrility: lewdness, drunkenness, profane swearing, and treasonable tendencies, are only a few of the crimes laid to his charge. He is accused in one breath of undue haste in seeking the degree of Doctor of Divinity; of unfilial neglect which left his mother dependent upon charity for support: of possessing a sanguine complexion; and of habitual brawling. Such a confused mass of invective could have but one effect: it gained him a little sympathy, and much notoriety. The coping stone was put to the whole by the action of the government, in his prosecution. Two motives combined to prompt it: the ministers felt themselves waning in popularity; and they attributed the weakening of their position to the efforts of the High Church party. They made no distinction between the moderate Churchman who simply defended his own privileges, and the fanatic who discredited the Revolution, and all but advocated treason. They were determined to do all they could to discredit the whole Church party through Sacheverell and his exaggerations.

But in the case of Godolphin another motive was also at work. Volpone was the name used by Ben Jonson, and of common colloquial application, as a synonym for the man of fox-like cunning. Speaking of apparent, but false, friends, Sacheverell had said, "In what moving and lively colours does the Psalmist point out the crafty insidiousness of such wily Volpones." The reference to Godolphin was plain, from the already current application of the nick-name to him: and forty years of statecraft had not made Godolphin strong

enough to despise it. If the application were doubtful, it was made more prominent by the extraordinary awkwardness of Burnet, who referred to it, not obscurely, in the House of Lords.

Amongst Godolphin's colleagues, Somers, at least, dissuaded him from the prosecution. But wounded vanity prevailed. Mr. Dolben, a Whig henchman, was chosen to bring the obnoxious sermon under the notice of the House. The Commons resolved to impeach Sacheverell of high crimes and misdemeanours: and the ministers entered upon a struggle of their own making, in which the sense of the country was soon against them, in which they drove a mass of moderate men into new definiteness of opposition, and which ended in their own defeat.

When Parliament met again after the Christmas recess, the articles of impeachment were carried to the House of Lords. It was the end of February before the trial came on; and throughout the length of its solemn farce, the court continued to be a sort of fashionable resort, in which the preacher provoked alternately the anger of his male audience by his insolence, and the sympathy of the ladies by his pathetic description of the danger that threatened his innocence. At length on the 23rd of March, judgment of three years suspension was pronounced; the offending sermon was to be burnt by the hands of the hangman: and for a result like this, the ministry had roused against them the whole sympathy of the nation, and had all but given the death-blow to the hopes of the Protestant succession.

Sacheverell was now the popular hero. His name was everywhere toasted: crowds cheered him as he passed through the streets: the ministry were hooted; and the Queen was greeted by cries that invoked her aid for "Church and 'Cheverel." At length open violence was used. The meeting houses were wrecked: and dissent and occasional conformity were attacked, as the tools whereby the liberties of

the church and the nation were to be sacrificed to the exigencies of faction.

All this had little reason in it: and those who profited by it had probably little design of bringing it about. Sacheverell himself can have had no such ambitious aim. If any one man planned the result of the trial, that man was Atterbury—of all extreme High Churchmen the one most akin in sympathy to Swift. The defence delivered by Sacheverell, which was unquestionably the most effective part of the trial, was most probably from the hand of Atterbury himself.*

To the mistake of this prosecution, another, even more serious, was added. The Duke of Marlborough, in a letter addressed to the Queen during the campaign, requested for himself the post of Captain-General for life. The claim was so astounding, as to rouse even the sluggish intellect, and submissive temper, of the Queen. Cowper had been consulted, and pronounced in no indistinct terms, against the proposal. Argyll, with something of the melodramatic arrogance that distinguished him, undertook, if the proposal was pressed, to take Marlborough, dead or alive, at the head of his army. Marlborough shewed here, and often on other occasions, that he stood altogether outside the range of English domestic politics: that the constitution of his own country was a problem that he had never solved: and that to carry out his great project of French subjugation, he was blind enough to risk all his popularity on a project that no thinking Englishman could listen to without disgust. Even the decisive failure of his scheme did not

* The current account of the defence, as prepared by Atterbury, suggests another story told regarding Atterbury a few years later, by Thomas Gent, the printer of York, whose autobiography is noticed by Southey in his *Doctor*. Gent tells how about 1718, he was taken to "a monastic looking building" at Westminster, to arrange for printing the defence of one Ken—sley, a clergyman: how he there saw a grave little man, in a black habit, who dictated the defence: and how he recognised his host some years after, when he went to see Bishop Atterbury driven in a coach to the Tower. (Life of Thomas Gent, edit. 1832, p. 87.) Secrecy and plotting were as the breath of life to Atterbury.

prevent its causing a scare, nor make it a less effective weapon, hereafter, in the hands of Swift.

Meanwhile, the disputes between the Queen and the Duchess of Marlborough had now reached their last stage. The Queen, driven by personal insolence and tyranny on the one hand, alarmed for the church and for the prerogative of her crown on the other, had sought help and relief from an intolerable incubus, where she could; and she had found it in Abigail Hill and Robert Harley.

When Parliament was prorogued, in spite of an apparent security of position, there was much to cause uneasiness to the Whigs. The shouts and bonfires of the London mob had reflected a feeling that was widespread through the country. The length of the war, the heavy burden of taxation, the distress in the agricultural districts, the undefined fear of unconstitutional schemes on the part of the ministry, to which Marlborough's ambition had given rise; the dictation of the Whig junta; and the jealousy of dissenting encroachments, had all swelled in volume till their force could no longer be ignored. In the Queen's own heart, they jarred on all her warmest sympathies. In the nation at large, they roused a deep-lying antipathy to innovation. In the minds of all the moderate men, they kindled a distrust of the Whigs. For such distrust, Swift's mind was already fully prepared.

The drunken mobs that pulled down Burgess's* chapel, shook their fists in the face of the Horse Guards, and were pursued through Lincoln's Inn Fields, Drury Lane, and Long Acre: that stopped the coaches in the streets, and forced the occupants to pledge Sacheverell's health, had very little thought of the abstract propositions of Filmer or of Locke. Tory money may have been, as Burnet hints,† at the root of some of the excesses: but even Tory money could only use

* Burgess was a noted Dissenting preacher, who attained much celebrity in wider circles than those of his own sect.

† *History of his own Time*, p. 849, ed. 1838.

the occasion, not create it. Two years before, the same mobs had been burning the Pope, the Devil, and the Pretender, in effigy, together, as the three symbols of the Tory faith. But now the current had carried the mob the other way.

Once roused, there was no mistaking the feeling. The Whigs were disconcerted: no minister knew to which of his colleagues he could trust. The Tory party, including many who had but little sympathy with Sacheverell, were jubilant. A typical form of address was drawn up, and passed from one corporation to another. The Queen was assured of their loyalty to Crown and Church. It was hinted that better times might come, and present danger cease, if the Queen were to consult her people. Here and there, dissentient voices were heard, but on the whole, the unanimity was astonishing. When Sacheverell set out in May to take possession of a living in Shropshire to which he had been presented, his progress was made the occasion of shewing how wide-spread was the reaction. At Oxford, at Banbury, at Warwick: at Shrewsbury and Ludlow, he was received as a conqueror returning from a successful campaign. Flags waved from the steeples, the streets were decked with flowers, and troops of yeomen and country gentlemen met him on horseback as he neared each town. When he alighted at his inn, the corporation came to pay their respects, and beg him to accept a gift of wine. The streets were crowded with holiday-makers, each wearing a white and gold rosette, with a gilt laurel leaf in the hat. If a Whiggish bishop or parson interfered to prevent the ringing of the bells, the mob seized the church, and locked the incumbent out. If the clappers of the bells were taken away, the hammer from the nearest smithy served to ring out a welcome to the doctor and his suite.

For all this, mad and reckless as it was, the ministers had themselves to blame. Wavering Whigs went over to the other side. Marlborough and Godolphin found the factions opposed to them growing in strength. Anne was more and more

inclined to listen to new whispers. The war continued, but its triumphs were more rare. Godolphin lost hope: Marlborough wrote letters of expostulation from the seat of war: and the Duchess, with her passionate violence, was daily widening the breach between her mistress and herself.

Such was the new world which Swift found around him, when he came back to England in September, 1710. Save for a visit to Bishop Ashe at Clogher in the previous November, he had spent his time between Dublin and Laracor.* In spring he had taken a prominent part as an opponent of the abolition of the Test. Brodrick, the Speaker, had just been appointed Lord Chief Justice, and the first act of the new Parliament, when it met in May, would be to elect his successor. The Court was pressing a candidate who was in favour of abolishing the Test: or, as the phrase ran, who desired to unite the Protestant interest in the kingdom. Swift wrote against the ministerial candidate, urging the majority not to be supine enough to let themselves be led by the views of the Governor, into accepting what their consciences disapproved.†

While he still lingered in his solitude at Laracor, he received, on the 10th of May, the news of his mother's death.‡

* Throughout the whole of this stay in Ireland, he seems to have been contributing more or less regularly to Steele's *Tatler*. The earliest of the *Tatlers* printed amongst his works is that of June 18, 1709, which refers to the female Platonic Societies then in vogue, some specimens of which are described in John Buncle's whimsical memoirs. But it is hard to believe, in spite of Swift's power of disguise, that a piece, so totally unlike his work, either in style or subject, could have come from his pen. Of the whole series ascribed to him, comparatively few bear any intrinsic marks of his hand.

† *A Letter to a Member of Parliament in Ireland on Choosing a new Speaker there.* Scott assigns a wrong date. Alan Brodrick resigned the Speakership, on being appointed Lord Chief Justice, in this year: and his successor was elected on May 19, 1710. Scott accepts the tract as written in 1708, at which time Swift's close connexion with the Castle would have prevented his writing what is a distinct attack upon the Lord-Lieutenant's policy.

‡ The memorandum in which it was recorded was copied by Mr. Nichols from one of Swift's memorandum-books, that is now lost. "On Wednesday,

There is no overstrained show of grief in the simple record of it in Swift's own words: but it tells us enough of the love he bore her, and of the weight of the blow that had now fallen. Henceforth, save for one, upon whom, as upon himself, he laid the burden of a mysterious and undefined bond, Swift stood alone: and yet he never felt the want of companionship more than now, when he was drifting away from those with whom he had hitherto acted—was fretting at the uncongenial solitude in which he was placed, and was feeling the gradual inroads of disease.

During June and July, Swift was engaged in a correspondence with Tooke, his bookseller; and it is at the close of a letter to Tooke that there occurs what is really the first indication on Swift's part of an inclination to change sides. As the facts have shewn us, he had long been opposed on many points to the Whigs: but he had hesitated, partly from association, partly from dislike of the Tories, to break altogether with them. Now he has new plans of work: he will soon be over in England: "Since it is likely," he says, "to be a new world, and since I have the merit of suffering by not complying with the old." This is the first clear evidence of a personal motive coming in to confirm Swift in opinions to which he had already been, for some time, inclined. But it is important to notice that this personal motive did not precede, but followed, his change of view.

For a while longer he lingers on with occasional opportunities of association with Addison at Dublin and Finglas. Addison

between seven and eight in the evening, May 10th, 1710, I received a letter in my chamber at Laracor (Mr. Percival and John Beaumont being by) from Mrs. Fenton, dated May 9th, with one enclosed, sent from Mrs. Worrall at Leicester to Mrs. Fenton, giving an account, that my dear mother, Mrs. Abigail Swift, died that morning, Monday, April 24th, 1710, about ten o'clock, after a long sickness, being ill all winter, and lame, and extremely ill a month or six weeks before her death. I have now lost my barrier between me and death: God grant I may live to be as well prepared for it, as I confidently believe her to have been! If the way to Heaven be through piety, truth, justice, and charity, she is there."

left finally, in August 1710: and Swift wrote after him from Dublin, in terms that proved no open breach to have as yet taken place, fully as Swift recognised the changes that were now imminent in the ministry. Whatever government may come or go, he says, Addison is at least sure of the veneration of Ireland. "In short," says Swift,* "if you will come over again when you are at leisure, we will raise an army, and make you King of Ireland." Lord Wharton soon followed his secretary: and then, on the 31st of August,† Swift set out. He crossed the channel that night: travelled from Holyhead in the train of Lord Mountjoy; and on the 7th of September he reached London, to judge for himself of the "new world" whose formation he had foreseen.

Changes had already been rapidly proceeding. Godolphin and his colleagues saw Mrs. Masham's ‡ influence now supreme over the Queen. Harley, who had been foiled before, was now in league with her; and the confederacy boded no good. The first decided blow was struck in the removal of Sunderland, in June, 1710.

The Whigs found their power slipping from their hands. They could not appeal to the country, because the country was thoroughly roused against them. Amongst the monied men in the city lay their chief support: in the allies of England abroad they might find assistance against the Tories. The alarm of the monied men and of the allies was, therefore, sedulously fostered. To the former it was represented, that Godolphin's withdrawal from office would occasion a collapse of credit: to the latter, it was urged that the fall of the Whigs meant the abandonment of the war, and the desertion of her allies by England. In their panic, the Whig ministers turned to strange helpmates. Sir Gilbert Heathcote, and other

* *Swift to Addison*, August 22, 1710.

† The dates are taken from the usual memorandum books.

‡ Abigail Hill had now become Mrs. Masham by her marriage with Mr. Masham, who had been groom of the chamber to Prince George of Denmark.

worthy city magnates, were sent to remonstrate with the Queen. The Emperor and the Dutch instructed their envoys to state their views on the domestic politics of England. Anne might fairly consider that this was only a confession of their selfishness and weakness, and that to dictation so ill-timed and so unconstitutional she need pay little heed. Both to the city magnates, anxious about their stock, and to the allies, anxious lest English troops should be withdrawn from fighting for their interests, evasive replies were returned.

In August, just on the eve of Swift's arrival, still more decided steps were taken. Parliament was to be dissolved and the verdict of the country asked: and meanwhile, Godolphin was desired to break his staff. Harley was brought into the Privy Council, and was named Chancellor of the Exchequer. The change was already wrought.

CHAPTER VIII.

SWIFT AND THE NEW MINISTRY.

September, 1710—May, 1711.

ÆTAT. 43.

Swift's advent in the "new world"—His own records of his conduct—His mission for the Irish Church—Breach with the Whigs deferred—The last of his *Tatlers*—*Description of a city shower*—Overtures from the Tories—Two Invitations for one day—Meeting with Harley—Takes service with the new Ministry—The election—*Sid Hamet's Rod*—Swift's mission for the Irish Church more hopeful—Coldness of Whig friends—Addison and Steele—The *Examiner*—Weak points in the ministerial position—Marlborough—The monied class—The October Club—Swift's defence of the Ministry—Appeal to the people—Attacks on Marlborough and Wharton—Piece-meal toleration—Defence of the landed aristocracy against the monied class—Influence of the *Examiner*—Opening of Parliament and Convocation—A white-letter day for Tory and High Churchman—Position of the Ministry—The inner cabinet and Swift—His new circle of friends—Stumbling-blocks in the way—The attempt of Guiscard, and its results—A new lease of power for Harley.

With Swift's advent on the "new world" which the changes of the last few months had brought about, a new scene in his life opens. It is now we have to bring to the test the charges against him of selfish and dishonest inconsistency.

There is at least no excuse for misrepresentation. From the moment of his landing in England down to his quitting it, in June, 1713, we have in the so-called "Journal" a record of unexampled minuteness and fidelity, in which Swift poured out, for the behoof of Esther Johnson, every passing idea that was borne in upon him from the scenes in which he took part, and the men with whom he associated. He tells us in that Journal more than mere opinions: he gives us a picture of the whims

and fancies, and prejudices, that lie at the root of opinion, and shew far more of a man's character than we can learn from any formal expression of his political creed. In the confidences meant only for an eye that would interpret them with leniency, and to whom his very caprices would have a special meaning, we can read the character of the man, and can see not only that he was honestly attached to the new ministry, but that he could not honestly have continued his allegiance to the Whigs.

He came over, at first, with very little idea either of the new position he was to take up, or of the part he was to play. He had thrown out, as we have seen, a casual expression of the hope that, failing other help, the new powers might give him some countenance. But he did not yet despair of accomplishing his mission on behalf of the Irish Church through his Whig friends.* He had been bitterly irritated by his previous failure, in the spring of 1709: but now he came, with a definite commission from the Irish Bench, that joined him with the Bishops of Ossory and Killaloe, as representative of the Irish Church. The whole amount of the remission asked for from all the sources, amounted to no more than £3,000 a year: but, small as it was, it meant something to a Church whose fabrics were fast disappearing by the devastations of time and of civil war; where glebe houses were an exception, and where half-a-dozen livings had to be grouped together, to produce a pittance for the incumbent or a congregation for the church. It was now feared that any hopes of the grant were likely to be extinguished by the ill-will that Wharton felt for the thwarting

* So little truth is there in the notion that Swift came over "burning for revenge on the Whigs." Yet even Scott, favourable as he is willing to be to Swift, makes himself responsible for this idea, by allowing it to appear in the prefatory note to the *Examiner*, (III., 259). Neither this note, indeed, nor many others in the edition, can be fairly ascribed to Scott himself: and it is one of the great defects of his edition that the volumes are annotated by various hands, and often on inconsistent principles. It is necessary to point out, however, how completely the remark misrepresents Swift's relation to the Whigs when he came over at this time.

of his test-abolition policy by Parliament and Convocation. The two bishops had hitherto been pressing the cause, but with so little zeal that, on Swift's arrival in London, he found they had already left.

To this task he now set himself, with little hope of success and with little liking for the instruments with which he had to work. "He never went to England," so he wrote to Stella, "with so little desire in his life." Let his commission succeed or not, he would stay only to finish it. The Whigs received him with open arms. "The Whigs were ravished to see me," he writes,* "and would lay hold on me as a twig while they are drowning." At first there is no sign that the breach between himself and them is irreparable. His letters are addressed to the care of Steele, who, though an ardent Whig, had not yet lost his government appointment. His associates in the early weeks were all prominent Whigs—Addison, Steele, Garth,† Congreve, and Halifax. He continues for a time even to write for the *Tatler*,‡ in which he had

* Sept. 9, 1710.

† Dr. (afterwards) Sir Samuel Garth, the author of the *Dispensary*, one of those against whom we shall afterwards find Swift bringing a charge of encouraging a riot on Queen Elizabeth's birthday. See chap. IX.

‡ About Swift's earlier contributions to the *Tatler* some doubt exists. Drake (Essays on *Tatler* and *Spectator*, vol. III.) assigns almost the same pieces to Swift as are admitted by Scott, save that the latter prints as Swift's, in addition, a part of No. 74, referring to the Table of Fame, which bears many marks of Swift's style, and No. 81, which is almost certainly not his. The other pieces assigned to him, both by Scott and by Drake, are: in No. 9, the verses on a Morning in Town; No. 32, On Madonella, a female *précieuse*, almost certainly *not* by Swift: along with a letter from Tobiah Greenhat, in No. 63, on a College for damsels, which is also unlikely to be his: No. 35, a short letter on the Family of Ix, which is probably by Dartiquenave: No. 59, a short letter from Obadiah Greenhat, ridiculing an Irish bull which Steele had made, which bears signs of Swift's style: a part of No. 66, on Preaching, with a reference to Atterbury, almost certainly written by Swift: parts of No. 67 and 68, on the Chamber of Fame, which have all the marks of Swift; No. 70, a short letter from Jonathan Rosehat, on the faults of clerical oratory, also bearing signs of Swift's work: No. 71, on Clerical Neglect, which appears more like the work of Steele than Swift: No. 230, referred to in the text: the verses in No. 238; and a letter in No. 258, on

helped Steele in the previous year. He began again by a paper* on the false taste that was corrupting style, anticipating, as it were, the strange proposal† which he soon after made to Harley for an English Academy. At present all he has to urge is the vulgarity of the colloquialisms that were creeping in, and the affectation of the modish abbreviations that docked words of a syllable or two. What he wants to restore is described in a characteristic sentence, as "that simplicity which is the best and truest ornament of most things in human life." He followed it up by one or two short poems, amongst which the most notable is the Description of the City Shower, which in some sixty lines of mock heroic poetry, gives us a picture, complete in all its graphic details, of the streets of town when their passengers were overtaken by the rain. Dulman sauntering to the coffee-house: the poet, grieving for the sufferings of his thread-bare coat: the "daggled females" rushing to the shop for shelter, only to

> "Pretend to cheapen goods, but nothing buy:"

the tucked-up sempstress, trudging through the mud: the beau boxed up in his chair: the spruce Templar, who waits in patience, all the while he affects to call a coach: the shed where, pursued by the elements,

> "Triumphant Tories, and despondent Whigs
> Forget their feuds, and join to save their wigs."

It is not surprising that Swift was pleased with the parody, and shewed something of the author's irritation at the scant appreciation by his Irish friends.‡

Lord Somers, too, receives him cordially, and recalls to him that recommendation to Lord Wharton, the recollection of which was not likely to be palatable to Swift. Lord Halifax

the use of the phrase "Great Britain," which is signed with the initials, J. S., M. P., N. R., for Swift, Prior, and Rowe.

* No. 230.

† See Chap. X.

‡ See Scott, XIV., 99. He tells us that the smells in his lodgings helped him to a part of the description. (Journal, Nov. 8, 1710.)

renews his professions of friendship: asks Swift to dinner, and courts him with that flattering attention of which he was so complete a master. But Swift's position was becoming every day more clear in its estrangement from the Whigs.

At first he scarcely understood the full extent of the change in popular feeling. In the earlier letters, he speaks of it almost as a joke. Day by day, its completeness becomes more evident. It makes him doubt and hesitate. The Whigs irritate and annoy him, but he scarcely feels that he himself can find a place amongst the Tories. Steele, he says, will lose his place as Gazetteer, "all the world detesting his engaging in parties."* The Whigs are "declining courtiers:"† a "cunning, provoked, discarded party:"‡ Swift is ready to regret his connexion with them, but he as yet sees nothing for it, but to remain an "indifferent spectator" of the struggle. "The Tories tell me,"§ he says, "that I can make my fortune if I please: but I do not understand them, or rather, I *do* understand them."

The changes went on apace. Cowper, the Lord Chancellor, made way for Sir Simon Harcourt: Somers ceased to be Lord President, and Lord Rochester took his place: even Boyle, the Secretary of State, was involved in the fall of the Whigs, as one of the managers against Sacheverell. Brydges,‖ whose proffered friendship Swift received coldly, retained his post of Paymaster, only by patching up a hasty alliance with the Tories. On the 21st of September, Parliament was dissolved; and just as the country was plunged into the excitement of an election, new Tory adherents were brought into the Ministry. Resignation followed resignation: "each," says Swift "as sincere as a miser's death-bed repentance." The Duke of Buckinghamshire became Lord Steward. Henry St. John, who had left office with Harley in 1708, now came back as

* Journal, Sept. 10.
† Journal, Sept. 18.
‡ Journal, Sept. 20.
§ Journal, Sept. 30.
‖ Afterwards Duke of Chandos: the Timon of Pope's Satire.

principal Secretary of State. Swift's old friend Lord Berkeley, now lying on his death-bed, was named Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire: and George Granville, hereafter to be one of the "Brethren" of the Club, and to attain fame as friend of Swift and Pope, became Secretary at War, supplanting Walpole. The Duke of Hamilton was made Lord Lieutenant of the County Palatine: and finally, on the 18th of October, the Duke of Ormond succeeded Wharton as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

In all these changes, Swift might find satisfaction, but it did not appear how he was to find his profit. But the turning point soon came. We have it in his own words.* "After I had put out my candle last night, my landlady came into my room, with a servant of Lord Halifax, to desire I would go dine with him at his house near Hampton Court: but I sent him word I had business of great importance that hindered me, &c. And, to-day, I was brought privately to Mr. Harley, who received me with the greatest respect and kindness imaginable: he has appointed me an hour on Saturday at four, afternoon, when I will open my business to him."

The change involved no surrender of principle. Already he had discarded the Whigs: he had laughed at their discomfiture, and had watched with contempt their awkward efforts to secure his favour. Already he had told Halifax that he "was the only Whig he loved"—which was a civil way of saying that he loved no Whigs. He had already blamed Steele for the officious zeal with which he had rushed into the party struggle. So far he had only disliked the Whigs: the further step was that now he became the ally of the Tories. Opinion, principle, inclination, and resentment at personal neglect, all combined to bring him over to that camp, where his sympathies had long lain, and the gates of which had been so readily thrown open at his approach.

Already he had in his pocket his lampoon on Godolphin.† The few lines describing the fate of *Sid Hamet's Rod* had a

* Journal, Oct. 4, 1710. † *Sid Hamet's Rod.* See Journal for Oct. 4.

success, which comparing them with Swift's other efforts, may to us seem somewhat strange. "It is cried up to the skies," says Swift: * and he recurs to it over and over again, with the curious pertinacity that he often shews as to pieces which we would scarcely regard as adding to his fame. The lampoon became the first war-note in his struggle with the Whigs.

His application for the First Fruits now took a new and hopeful aspect; Harley promised to lay it before the Queen: and the only doubt now was as to the date when it would take effect, and the manner in which it should be announced. Esther Johnson had feared that the changes in high places might thwart his efforts; but it is far otherwise. "Revolutions a hindrance to me in my business!" he says, † "Revolutions?—to me in my business? If it were not for the revolutions, I could do nothing at all: and now I have all hopes possible."

He is settling down now in his new condition. His talk of an immediate return to Ireland is less definite. He had new interests and new friends in London ‡; nor were these as yet of one party only. A young Whig poet, named Harrison, a sprightly student fresh from Oxford, had attracted his friendship, and he was determined to make the poet's fortune. Steele and Addison are still much with him. Congreve, an old man before his time, still greeted him as the most delightful of companions.§ On the other hand, Matthew Prior, the steady adherent of the Tories, and now anticipating Swift in the *Examiner:* Nicholas Rowe, whom interest was leading over to the same side: Freind and Arbuthnot, the literary physicians of that party,—were all coming under his influence, and learning the charm that acted so strongly in spite of the pride and

* Journal Oct. 14.

† Journal, Oct. 14.

‡ Morphew at this time published the volume of *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse*. London, 1711. It did not contain the *Tale of a Tub*, or the *Battle of the Books*.

§ Congreve was now blind with a cataract: and though, as Swift says, "never rid of the gout, yet looks young and fresh, and as cheerful as ever." Journal, Oct. 26.

restlessness that made him dreaded by those who knew him only on the outside. But presently there arose vexations and irritations. Some of his former friends had reproached him for "his greatness amongst the Tories"; but "he valued them not."* When the same reproaches came from Addison and Steele, Swift felt them more. Steele had got into trouble by his rash interference in the party struggle. Swift attempted to stay the penalty: but he did so with the result that might have been expected from one so vain and petulant as Steele. The matter was talked over with Addison: but Swift "found party had so possessed him, that he talked as if he suspected me, and would not fall in with anything I said." Swift goes on:—

"So I stopped short in my overture, and we parted very dryly; and I shall say nothing to Steele, and let them do as they will: but if things stand as they are, he will certainly lose it (his post), unless I save him; and therefore I will not speak to him, that I may not report to his disadvantage. Is not this vexatious? And is there so much in the proverb of proffered service? When shall I grow wise? I endeavour to act in the most exact points of honour and conscience, and my nearest friends will not understand it so. What must a man expect from his enemies? This would vex me, but it shall not; and so I bid you good night."†

Amidst these suspicions of his friends, and under the burden of ill-health, Swift entered with no light heart upon the task of defending the Ministry. The difficulties to be met were enormous. The first was the opposition of Marlborough; another, almost as threatening, was the opposition of the monied class. Rumours were industriously spread that the New Ministry would usher in the rule of the Pretender by applying a sponge to the National debts.‡ But Harley found

* Journal, Oct. 20.

† Journal, Oct. 22.

‡ The avowed opposition of the ministerial supporters to the monied men, gave some colour to these insinuations of repudiation. But there is no evidence whatever that any such scheme was dreamt of: and the best argument against Swift's having any notion of such a scheme being on foot is, that he did a little stockjobbing himself, by investing £300 in the funds, when they were low, in the sure confidence that the fall was only temporay.—See Journal for Oct. 13, 1710.

that exaggerated support was as dangerous as opposition. The wilder Tories refused to listen to reason. Banded together in the October Club, they strove to press the Ministry into extremes. If their advice had been followed, to use St. John's own words, the Ministry would have been blown up in four and twenty hours. Nothing was more necessary than to soothe the wild impulses of these undisciplined supporters, without losing their support.

The Ministry were now about to meet Parliament.* They were safe in a large majority, if that majority could be kept within bounds. Harley, if he had few other talents, had at least learned by experience something of the art of leading a parliamentary majority. But beyond this, a wider verdict had to be secured, a wider support to be conciliated: and this was a part only of the task now entrusted to Swift.

He began to write in the *Examiner* on the 2nd of November, 1710, and continued it till June in the next year. No literary defence of an administration was ever more admirably devised. Swift was then at the height of his power: all his energies were roused to the task, and he brought to it every stimulus that personal irritation could suggest. To say that he distanced all his competitors, is only half the truth. He took a totally different range. The mass of these strove to gain attention by a jerky, half-colloquial style, by what was known as "banter," of a rough and ready sort, and by a clumsy twisting of an opponent's arguments which was supposed to be attractive to the crowd of readers.† Nothing could be in stronger contrast with the strength and range of the sarcasm of Swift.

Whatever were Swift's feelings to Whigs or Tories when he left Ireland in August, there can be no question as to his

* It opened on the 25th of November.

† In No. XXII. of the *Examiner*, Swift has given a parody of the efforts of his answerers, the most effective point in which is its truth to the originals which it is intended to hold up to ridicule.

genuine anger now. Each week had shown him more completely, the deceptions which the Whigs practised to upset their opponents, the personal bitterness which they brought into the struggle, and the evident affectation of the alarm which they professed to feel. The first words of his first *Examiner* ridicule the pretensions of the man who makes himself a partizan, when so placed as to have no real interest in partizanship. His contempt had been roused by the affected fears around him. "Several of my acquaintance among the declining party," he says, "are grown so insufferably peevish and splenetic, profess such violent apprehensions for the public, and represent the state of things in such formidable ideas, that I find myself disposed to share in their afflictions although I know them to be groundless and imaginary, or, *which is worse*, purely affected. To offer them comfort one by one, would be not only an endless, but a disobliging task. Some of them, I am convinced, would be less melancholy, if there were more occasion."

Subterfuges and tricks like these, he sets himself with all his heart to strip off. He claims* to write as "an impartial hand": and to explain away rather than to oppose the delusions which the discarded party would spread over the nation. To begin with, he is unwilling to admit the clear distinction between the parties, which Godolphin and his adherents would fain make out. "Let any one," he says,† "examine a reasonable honest man of either side, upon those opinions in religion and government which both parties daily buffet each other about, he shall find hardly one material point in difference between them." The bitterest opponents of the Ministry are not those who differ with their principles, but those who envy their power. "The bulk of the Whigs," he says,‡ some months afterwards, "appears rather to be linked to a certain set of persons, than any certain set of principles: so that, if I were to define a member of that party, I should say, he was one who believed in the late Ministry." And as their vaunted principles

* *Examiner*, No. XV. † *Ibid.* ‡ *Examiner*, No. XLIII.

sink on examination, into the merest envy, so their numbers, in spite of their claim to represent the nation, dwindle into a handful. He is never tired of ridiculing the pretension which spoke of the Ministry as a faction—a faction, forsooth, which is supported by Queen and Parliament, by the clergy, and at least nine-tenths of the nation.* Such flimsy pretences he brushes aside: and beyond the handful of malcontents, he appeals boldly to the nation, by the same instinct which guided himself in his later Irish struggle, and which he seems to have suggested to Bolingbroke as the keynote of the political ideal with which Bolingbroke endeavoured to link his own name.† He lays hold of "this mighty change in the dispositions of the people," which the discontented Whigs would fain describe "as only a short madness in the vulgar."‡ "Will they stand to this appeal," he says again, "and be determined by the *vox populi*, to which side their title of faction belongs?"§

Having thus reduced his opponents to the level of a discarded faction, and no national party, Swift pursues two distinct methods in dealing with them. In the first he attacks the views they represent: in the second, the personal character of their leaders. Members of the recent Ministry are attacked under the thin disguises of names from ancient history: but the brunt of his satire is reserved for his special enemy, Lord Wharton, and for the man whose name chiefly threatened danger to the Ministry, the Duke of Marlborough. In the character of Verres, Wharton and his misdeeds in the Government of Ireland, are held up to scorn. No pains are spared to press home each charge against him, to cover him not only with hatred, but contempt.‖ With Marlborough a very different

* Some three or four times in the course of these papers, Swift claims the same proportion (nine-tenths) of the nation, as supporters of the Ministry.

† See Chapter XV.

‡ *Examiner*, No. XIV.

§ *Examiner*, No. XXXI.

‖ The pamphlet on the character of Lord Wharton, in which Swift indulged his hatred more freely still, came out early in December.

method is pursued. Swift knew how false, as a piece of tactics, it would have been to rouse sympathy for Marlborough by unmeasured invective, and he repeatedly declares in the Journal that his efforts have been given to temper the attacks on Marlborough. When he has to deal with him he invariably chooses one method. He paints in strong colours the vices of ambition and avarice. He shews what circumstances may heighten our dislike of them, what means of gratifying them are most odious. He lingers over the stains that they leave upon a name that might otherwise be glorious. And thus, without making any too visible attack upon Marlborough personally, he leaves the picture he has drawn to find its counterpart in the Duke, and makes the reader, and not himself, responsible for the identification.

But beyond personal invective, Swift is never weary of attacking the fallacies on which he now believed the Whig party to rest. He shews how flagrantly inconsistent their religious toleration is, with that political intolerance which bans all those who do not subscribe to the narrow articles of their shifting political creed. "They impose a hundred tests; they narrow their terms of communion: they pronounce nine parts in ten of the kingdom heretics, and shut them out of the pale of their Church. These very men, who talk so much of a comprehension in religion among us, how come they to allow so little of it in politics, which is their sole religion?"* He shews how consistently they have poured contempt upon the Church; and how ready they are to break down the walls that defend her against scepticism and dissent. He shews how they have attacked the clergy by charges inconsistent with one another, have at once "despised them for their poverty, and hated them for their riches: reproached them with avarice, and taxed them with luxury: accused them of promoting arbitrary power, and of attacking the prerogative."†

But the main burden of his complaint is one which weighed

* *Examiner*, No. XIX. † *Examiner*, No. XXI.

deeply with Swift, which through him influenced a whole school of thought, and which became the chief basis of the later Tory party. "For twenty years," he says, "the nation has groaned under the intolerable burden of those who sucked her blood for gain. We have carried on wars, that we might fill the pockets of stock-jobbers. We have revised our constitution, and by a great and united national effort, have secured our Protestant succession, only that we may become the tools of a faction, who arrogate to themselves the whole merit of what was a national act. We are governed by upstarts, who are unsettling the landmarks of our social system, and are displacing the influence of our landed gentry by that of a class of men who find their profit in our woes. If the late discarded Ministry represented anything, they represented this: and the change that has now come, will awaken the nation to a sense of its mistakes, will recover the rightful influence of the landed gentry, and will rid us of the pestilential swarm of stock-jobbers who are confederate with the Whigs." This is not the place to weigh or criticize these views: it is enough to point out that the note Swift strikes here, is one which passed on through the satires of Pope, and the pages of Bolingbroke, as a distinctive mark of the Toryism which they professed.

Throughout the whole series of the Essays, Swift takes up this theme repeatedly. "These men come," he says, "with the spirit of shop-keepers, to frame rules for the administration of kingdoms: as if they thought the whole art of government consisted in the importation of nut-megs, and the curing of herrings."* "But, God be thanked," he goes on, "they and their schemes are vanished, and their places shall know them no more." The Act which was passed in the first session of the new Parliament, requiring the possession of a certain amount of landed property as a qualification for membership of Parliament, he praises as "that noble bill of qualification," which is to secure "that future parliaments be

* *Examiner*, No. XXI.

composed of landed men, and our properties be no more at the mercy of those who have none themselves, or at least only what is transient or imaginary."* In the same spirit, he inveighed against the contempt for birth and nobility, as "of all the heresies in politics profusely scattered by the partizans of the late administration,"† that which is the most displeasing and most dangerous.

Such were the lines on which Swift conducted, during these months, the successful defence of the Ministry. As the series of Essays draws near its close, we see the tone of triumph more apparent, while he accepts with some contempt, the tribute of acquiescence with which the Whigs had replaced their endless prognostications of evil. As spring comes on we shall find new causes contributing to the Tory success; but all through the winter the fight was hard enough.

The *Examiner* soon became notorious. Fifty times a day, Swift tells us,‡ he heard the *Examiner* railed at and commended, and was forced to wear an indifferent countenance. His own importance grew with that of the Ministry, with whom, day by day, his own relations became more close.

When Parliament met, the triumphant alliance between the Ministry and the Church was curiously typified. William Bromley, the Tory member for Oxford University, was chosen Speaker: and on the same day Convocation elected as Prolocutor, Bromley's old college friend and the foremost champion of Convocation's rights—Dr. Francis Atterbury. Smalridge introduced the Prolocutor to the upper house in a Latin speech, which sounded a note of triumph for the High Church party. "The zeal of the people, the fervour of the aristocracy, the loving care of the Queen, the closest bonds of union between all ranks of citizens and the Church—all were in their favour. And now the old ties of sisterhood that were wont to bind together Parliament and Convocation, were

* *Examiner*, No. XXIV. † *Examiner*, No. XL.
‡ *Examiner*, No. XVIII.

renewed in the choice made by each that day, of a President for their debates."

Atterbury replied in a speech which carried the note of triumph even higher. He drew a bold picture of the Church as it ought to be. "As Englishmen, the clergy readily adhered to the view that Liberty and Authority went naturally together."* The Church was to be "*pulchra, suavis, et decora,*" but none the less "*terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata.*" Now was the time to realize their hopes. "Was there no *Queen* in Gilead, was there no physician there?" It was a new era: a new Constantine was to cover with the Royal purple the errors of the past, and the quarrels of factions.

Nothing could have been better than the auspices under which the new work began. If only Marlborough could be reduced: if the city magnates could be persuaded to trust their money to the new Ministry: if, in the ministerial ranks, no disunion were allowed to spread: and if, finally, the hot headed Tory squires, who met at the Bell in King Street, Westminster, and called themselves the October Club, could be kept in check, all might go well. And for the present, thanks largely to Swift, all did go well, "narrow" as was "the isthmus on which the Ministry stood,"—bridging over the gulf between the discarded Whigs and more rabid Tories. The funds began to rise. Disaffection in the army was speedily checked by the cashiering of three officers of high rank who had drunk damnation to the Ministry. In January the Ministers were freed from the presence of the Duchess of Marlborough, whose ensigns of office were delivered up by her husband. He himself remained in the Queen's service: but he was obliged to exercise a studied caution: and, even at the head of his army, felt himself to be no longer the wielder of uncontrolled authority. His complete fall was only a matter of time.

Towards the close of January, we find that a sort of Cabinet

* "In eam quidem, Angli cum sint, facile propendent sententiam, libertatem cum imperio pulchré constare posse."

had been formed within the ranks of the Ministry. Harley, St. John, and Harcourt, met for private consultation; they held the threads of the whole policy of the government in their hands; and Swift was soon associated with them in these meetings, as one whose advice they must follow, and on whose help they must perforce rely. On the 17th of February, we find him first admitted to the Saturday dinner, at which this select circle gathered. From the date of that first meeting, which his Journal chronicles in October of the previous year, his intimacy both with Harley and St. John had grown apace. Harley's attention flattered him: and the easy and careless brilliance of St. John attracted him, even though it inspired him with a certain distrust, which he never entirely shook off. But, kindly as they both treated him, he occasionally found in their conduct cause of offence. He resented as an indignity the offer of £50 which Harley made to him, as a cheap payment for his services, and the anger that it roused was only with some difficulty appeased. When St. John, with the caprice of a spoilt favourite, affected to shew him some coldness, Swift at once refused to submit to any such captiousness of mood: warning him that, if he had a complaint to make, he must state it, and not leave to his friend the trouble of guessing at the cause of his coldness: "it was what he would hardly bear from a crowned head, and he thought no subject's favour worth it."* Swift is determined to be an equal amongst equals or to have no part in their affairs. "If we let these great Ministers pretend too much," he says jocularly, "there will be no governing them."† He knew and had weighed beforehand the price that he would have to pay for such familiar intercourse. "They call me nothing but Jonathan: and I said, I believe they would leave me Jonathan, as they found me: and that I never knew a Ministry do anything for those whom they make companions of their pleasures; and I believe you will find it so; but I care not."‡

* Journal, April 3, 1711. † Journal, Feb. 7, $17\frac{11}{10}$. ‡ Journal, Feb. 17, $17\frac{11}{10}$.

While Swift was thus the sworn associate of the Ministers, and giving them an assistance without which they could scarcely have maintained their hold on the country for a month, his own private life, at the same time, has points of interest which we must not overlook. It is true that he looked forward with longing to the time when the suspense and anxiety might be over, and he might rejoin Stella. Over and over again he tells her of his hope "that they may never be asunder again." But, in spite of himself, there were influences arising that told ill for Stella's future and his own. His fidelity was not less; his satisfaction with his present position was not greater; but the brightness of that present position, even with its drawbacks, stood in sharp contrast to the dreary monotony that awaited him at Laracor. Its bustle and variety did not come amiss to Swift, however dutifully he might long to be back in the quiet peacefulness of his life with Stella. He felt himself a power amongst men. He renewed old friendships and attracted new. Lord Peterborough shewed his affection with his usual fantastic eccentricity, and the charm was not lost on Swift.* When Peterborough sets out this year for Spain, he and Swift arrange "to be mighty constant correspondents."† Matthew Prior, with his maxim of "*vive la bagatelle*," came to be accepted with a toleration not quite natural to Swift. Young Harrison was started on a new *Tatler* in January, and obtained soon after, through Swift's recommendation, the post of secretary to Lord Raby's embassy. Amongst all sorts and conditions of men, Swift was now moving in free intercourse, from Dartineuf, the epicure, "the man who knows everything and whom everybody knows,"‡

* It was largely through Swift's agency that Peterborough was withdrawn from his former Whig friends, those "junta pigmies," as he calls them.

† Journal, Jan. 3, $17\frac{11}{10}$. The Journal gives us a lively picture of Peterborough, on the eve of his departure, surrounded at an eating house by a crowd of money-lenders and harpies of various sorts.

‡ Journal, March 22, $17\frac{11}{10}$.

to Dartineuf's friend, the rising poet of the day, "Mr. Pope, a papist."

How long things might have gone on thus, either with the Ministry or with Swift, it is hard to say. The position of the Ministry was far from secure. It was needful to have some policy more definite than that of ridiculing the fallen Whigs, or recalling their mistakes. It was impossible, so long as the war went on, to be altogether independent of Marlborough, and Marlborough's recovered influence would undoubtedly bring back the Whigs. Complications were certain to arise, and were threatening from more points than one. Finance was a stumbling-block: the city was still alienated from the Government. The "narrow isthmus" on which Swift saw that the Ministry stood, might soon break down. By degrees it was recognized that there was but one means whereby the Ministry and the country might be saved: it was a means, however, which no one cared very loudly to proclaim. "We must have peace," says Swift,* "let it be a good or a bad one, though nobody dares talk of it." Nowhere in the *Examiner* had Swift ventured to press the proposal which he thus broaches in the Journal. On the contrary, he felt it to be necessary to maintain the Tories to be every whit as zealous in the prosecution of the war as their opponents. But the words of the Journal give us, unquestionably, the conviction which was pressing on him and on the Ministry. The chance was as yet, however, a desperate one. But only four days after the words were written, the whole aspect of affairs was changed.

The 8th of March was the anniversary of the Queen's accession, and was celebrated with the usual rejoicings. The House of Parliament attended divine service, and a Court was afterwards held. But the Queen did not appear. There were vague rumours of danger. She had been abroad the day before: but on the ground, as was alleged, of some trifling illness,

* Journal, March 4, $17\frac{11}{10}$.

she now kept her room. As Swift was walking in the Mall, about two o'clock, in the midst of the holiday crowd, one face struck him as he passed along: it was that of a French adventurer of noble family, whose career was well known about town. The Marquis de Guiscard, as he now called himself, had begun his career in the Catholic Church: but after a long course of scandal, intrigue, conspiracy, and falsehood, he had obtained a command in the English army and been enriched by pensions both from the States, and from England. For some years this continued. But he accomplished nothing: he was despised by those associated with him: officers of any name and character refused to serve under him: he trafficked with the commissions in his regiment to a degree that, even at that day, was scandalous: he ran into debt: he shocked a not too strict society by the outrageous licence of his morals: he flaunted his notoriously ill-gotten gains in the face of London society, where he was distinguished for the splendour of his entertainments, for the magnificence of his equipage, for the number of his kept mistresses. Such a life was only too likely to bring him into contact with St. John: and a quarrel had arisen between them as to the paternity of a child of which neither cared to assume the responsibility.

The patience of the Ministry with this adventurer, was already on the wane when Godolphin fell. Guiscard had proved too arrant a rogue and too hairbrained a desperado to suit their purpose, however eager they were to find instruments against France. His supplies with withdrawn. He borrowed and begged and starved. His equipage was dropped: his entertainments ceased. At this juncture it was that his former boon companion, St. John, came to be Secretary of State. By his help—from motives of kindness, or from fear of exposure, or both—Guiscard obtained the promise of a pension of £500 a year. But a Government that had come to power to reduce expenditure, could not afford to be lavish. Harley was

at the Treasury: he had no ties with Guiscard in his past life; and by him the pension was cut down to £400, and provision for its regular payment was refused. Angry, disappointed, starving, the maddened wretch sought for some plan which would at once satisfy his craving for intrigue and his extravagance. He entered into correspondence with France, though with what motive it is hard to say. The Ministry were alarmed; St. John issued a warrant for his arrest; the Privy Councillors were summoned to the Cockpit; and within an hour after Swift had met him and been struck by his "excited air," he was in the hands of the Queen's messenger. He had, we are told, hardly eaten a fair meal for four months. Consciousness of his guilt, or despair of regaining the revenues which he had before enjoyed, made him desperate: he begged the messenger to kill him. His boast in former days that the scaffold was only for the coward, and that he carried that with him which would deliver him from the executioner, was unfulfilled; and in a half-frenzied state he was carried to Whitehall, where the Council had met. Guiscard was insolent under examination, and was at once evasive and confused. He sought a word in private with St. John, who refused the request. The fellow was now goaded to wild fury, and probably neither thinking nor caring what he did, he made two or three thrusts at Harley with a penknife, which he had picked up from a table in an adjoining room. A noisy scuffle followed. Every one started to his feet: and St. John, with an alertness that had not a little of bravado in it, attacked the unarmed wretch with his sword. The others rushed between and broke St. John's sword: the would-be assassin was at length overpowered and seized by a brawny messenger: and Harley's wound was looked to. It was not dangerous, except for the ill-state of Harley's health, harassed at the time by anxieties which he had attempted to conceal, and injured by years of over-indulgence in drink.

But, for the time, his political fortune was made.* The news spread like wildfire over London. The attempt, on the face of it, was little else than the frenzied outburst of a desperado, maddened by drink and disappointment. There was every expectation that the man attacked would speedily be restored. But a universal feeling was excited by the act. Each citizen seemed to find the air full of the daggers of hired French assassins. The Ministry, as well as Harley, rose rapidly in popularity. The people would have lynched Guiscard had they caught him, and as it was they thronged to the Tower to insult his body when death freed him from the possibility of the scaffold.† Parliament passed one resolution after another, congratulating the Queen on the preservation of her Minister, and Harley on his miraculous escape. They devised a new law to meet such attempts in future, and might even have stained the statute book by an *ex post facto* penalty, had not Guiscard's death prevented such a signal folly.

The news reached Swift as he was lingering after dinner in Lady Catherine Morris's drawing-room. The company broke up in consternation, and Swift seemed to receive a double portion of the current alarm. For the time, he appears to us in a natural guise. The cynicism, the sarcasm, the half-captious comment, that succeed one another so quickly in the Journal, break down at once. We see him for the moment stirred to

* An account of the attempt, which carefully brought out all the points most likely to rouse the nation's sympathy, was prepared by Mrs. Manley, the authoress of the Memoirs of the New Atalantis, under the eye and direction of Swift.

† In Guiscard's last hours, as we are told by Swift, one heart, and one heart only, in London, felt for him. "A poor wench," who probably owed him nothing but her ruin, sent him a bottle of sack. It was feared that it might contain poison, and the keeper refused to admit it. When the poor wretch died, his body was exposed to the crowd, and the wounds received from various ministerial hands were duly pointed out by the attendants. Swift condemns the show: but it was left for Anne herself, when she heard of it, to send summary orders to discontinue the indecency. Swift is so far affected by the feeling of the moment, that he cannot hide his regret that the childish barbarity of hanging the body in chains was prevented by a legal technicality.

the very heart, and absolutely natural in his grief and his anxiety. The shortness of his acquaintance with Harley is forgotten. The memory of half-humorous estrangements, and of the resentment caused by the ill-timed offer of money, is gone at once. Swift only remembers his wounded patron as one who showed him kindness after others had misled, or neglected, or suspected, or dallied with, him: as one who had always treated him with "the tenderness of a parent." During these weeks Swift's hopes and thoughts centre about the sick bed; and on Harley's recovery, he becomes his closest confidant in wielding that added power, that now was his.

CHAPTER IX.

SWIFT, AND THE STRUGGLE FOR THE PEACE.

May—December, 1711.

ÆTAT. 43—44.

The personal bond between Swift and Harley—The Ministry and the task before them—The favour of the Church secured—Death of Rochester—Harley created Earl of Oxford and Lord Treasurer—Swift's estimate of Oxford and of St. John—His intercourse with the Ministry—Other sides of his life—New intimates—His lodgings at Chelsea—Atterbury and Swift—The Club and its aims—Swift at Windsor—Visitors from Ireland—New enemies—The Duchess of Somerset, and the *Windsor Prophecy*—Old friends and new—Arbuthnot and Swift—A "bite" for the Maids of Honour—Life at Windsor—Sacheverell and his claims—Lord Peterborough and Swift—The Vanhomrighs—Mrs. Anne Long—Swift's carelessness as to his own interest—Proposals for a Peace—Fall of Bouchain—Dr. Hare's Sermon—The *Vindication of the Duke*—Negociations on foot—Prior and his Mission—Swift's account of it—The Whigs and Nottingham—The Dissenters and their schemes—Swift's reply to their appeal—The *Hue and Cry after Dismal*—The *Conduct of the Allies*—Marlborough's return—A suspected plot—Parliamentary opposition—Prospects of failure—Swift's suspense—Marlborough's dismissal—Twelve new peers—The Ministry saved.

THE weeks that followed the attack on Harley drew more close that bond which had been stimulated at first by pique on Swift's side, by policy on Harley's. It was with this as with all Swift's relations to his fellow-men: every tie, be it in politics, or in literature, ripened with him into a personal friendship, just as every dispute grew, for him, into an irksome personal antipathy. Rough as was his coating of cynicism, it covered a sensitivity only too keen. As with others, so now with Harley, his attachment blinded his judgment: and to that attachment he paid the tribute of an unchanging, even when an impolitic, devotion.

Harley needed, at this moment, all the help that Swift could give him. The personal popularity which Guiscard's attack had brought was in its nature evanescent. Harley must base the ascendancy of the Tories on a sounder foundation if it were to last. The Whigs must be deprived of their monopoly of financial reputation. A specious scheme for converting the national debt into a terminable loan seemed to promise this result. The orthodox churchmen must be attached to the Tory party by some solid bonds. Swift suggested a means of doing so, by a vote of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds which was to supply fifty churches for that new and busy population which had arisen between Westminster and Temple Bar, and between Charing Cross and Soho. These were but the beginnings: more definite lines of policy were laid before long.

Harley's moderate Toryism might still have been overshadowed by Toryism of another hue. The leader of this more rigid school was Lord Rochester; but on the 3rd of May, Lord Rochester's death freed Harley from a powerful rival. It was followed before long by visible signs of Harley's increasing power. On the 24th of May, he became Earl of Oxford and Mortimer and Baron Wigmore. A week later, the new Earl was advanced to the dignity of Lord Treasurer.

In Swift's own words, Harley had grown "by persecution, turning out, and stabbing." All helped to give him a hold on Swift's affection, and to win from Swift a respect which was strangely high. Harley had an unquestionable skill in the lesser arts of statesmanship: he had some tact in parliamentary management: he had, what was more, a certain keenness of appreciation for national necessities. All these many of his contemporaries probably rated too low: but with an estimate much more certainly wrong, his apathy was mistaken by Swift for philosophy, his hesitation for calculating wisdom. "The Treasurer," says Swift, "is much the greatest Minister I ever knew: regular in life, with a true sense of religion, an

excellent scholar, and a good divine; of a very mild and affable disposition, intrepid in his notions, and indefatigable in business, an utter despiser of money for himself, yet frugal, perhaps to an extremity, for the public."* We might be surprised at the estimate, did we not recollect the strong and healthy admiration that Swift, like all the best amongst literary men, felt for those whose power lay in practical, rather than in theoretic work, and proved itself by the tangible evidence of success in affecting men.

Side by side with Harley, stood another, whose meteor-like genius also attracted Swift. But the genius of St. John, finer as it was in grain and fibre, yet carried with it always, for Swift, something of distrust. It is thus, for instance, that Swift speaks of the new Secretary when all the world was running after him.

"I think Mr. St. John the greatest young man I ever knew: wit, capacity, beauty, quickness of apprehension, good learning, and an excellent taste: the best orator in the House of Commons, admirable conversation, good nature, and good manners: generous, and a despiser of money. *His only fault is talking to his friends in way of complaint of too great a load of business, which looks a little like affectation; and he endeavours too much to mix the fine gentleman and man of pleasure with the man of business. What truth and sincerity he may have I know not.*"†

The coarse debauchery of St. John roused Swift's indignation and contempt; the whims and caprices of the spoiled favourite of fortune moved his ridicule only. Friendly as they now were, intimate as they afterwards became, there was nothing in the bond between Swift and St. John, that could compare with the tie that knit together Oxford and Swift.

That was not merely the tie of colleague to colleague. Bound by no official trammels, Swift could speak as no colleague could, and claimed exemption from all official technicalities. Rather than a confidant in business, he was a guide in policy: rather than a tactical adviser, he was an interpreter

* *Swift to Archbishop King*, Aug. 26, 1711. † Journal, Nov. 3, 1711.

of the thoughts of men: ready also to translate into popular form the ideas embraced in his patron's schemes.

Such a relation involved close and constant work, and Swift paid for it the penalty of ill-health. Close and ill-ventilated lodgings, with the press of exciting business, brought back his old enemies, deafness and giddiness. To escape awhile he took lodgings at Chelsea, walking backwards and forwards between the village, where he slept, and Mrs. Vanhomrigh's house, where he left the gown and wig he wore in town. He describes in the Journal this walk, out through the Mall, with its evening crowd of promenaders, and past Buckingham House, into the hay-fields beyond, and so to his lodgings, half-a-mile beyond Chelsea Church. There he lived close by Atterbury, now Dean of Carlisle, whose library, garden, and even larder were open to Swift, and whose chariot often carried him to town and saved the expense of hiring a hackney-coach. In Atterbury's library they often lingered late on their return from town, and forgot for a while the wrangles of Convocation, and the excitement of the political struggle.

It was during Swift's stay at Chelsea, that the Society or Club was formed, which typified much that keeps the memory of these four years green, and out of which the Scriblerus Club appears to have grown. Swift was the centre of the whole: and though it was started in his absence, the idea was communicated to him in June, and it was left to him to frame the rules. Its members were at first but twelve: and they were linked together by literary tastes, no less than by their hatred of the Whigs. It was, as its founders expressed it, "to help conversation and to aid desert by recommendations." Its members were to have one of two qualifications: they must be men who had interest, or men who had wit. The Lord Treasurer, the Duke of Ormond, St. John, and Lord Arran: Bathurst, Lansdowne, and Masham: Swift, Arbuthnot, and Freind—typified the various elements of which it was composed. Whatever the difference of rank, membership

created a brotherhood which superseded other titles. The members met every Thursday, at some one of the many eating houses between St. James's Street and St. Martin's Lane, and the president for the evening entertained his brethren.

Leaving Chelsea in July, Swift came back for a short time to Suffolk Street, before the town broke up. Then he moved with the Court to Windsor, to be near the Lord Treasurer and Secretary. The stir and the movement, the bustle and the variety of the Court, as well as the beauty of the place, attracted him. Moving amongst the motley society that gathered there, he was gaining new discernment of motives, deeper knowledge of human nature, it may well be, also, a surer basis for his cynicism. But he found time for acts of kindliness. Joe Beaumont from Trim; Dr. Raymond, its vicar; Archdeacon Walls, his trusty factotum in Dublin, all had some kindness done them. Even Dilly Ashe, the brother of St. George Ashe, the Bishop of Clogher, received a kindly greeting, if not for his own, at least for his brother's sake, much as his lack of personal dignity tried Swift's patience. "The king of inconstancy," he is called by Swift, who prophesies that his bloated face "will hiss in the waters at the bath." "The rabble will say," writes Swift, "there goes a drunken parson, and, which is worse, they will say true."*

Parnell, too, the young Irish poet, came over with an introduction from Bishop Ashe, hoping to secure some attention for his poetic gifts on the larger theatre of London. Slender as was the rill of his poetic fountain, it won a ready appreciation from Swift, who liked him for having broken with the Whigs, for the unpretending simplicity of his disposition, for the keenness of temperament that was soon tried by bereavement in the death of his wife. Parnell never rallied from the blow: and Swift's sympathy for the poet's distress perhaps increased the respect for his muse. "He passes all the poets of the

* Journal, June 30, 1711.

day by a bar's length," says Swift. However others might judge of Parnell's weaknesses, they met with no severity of condemnation from Swift: and at the wreck that sorrow had begun Swift at least refused to gibe.

To help his friends was, as Swift himself said, "too much of a pleasure to him to be a virtue." But small kindnesses did not form the only varieties in his busy life. It had also a harder side. His was not a temperament to hang back from a new foe: and he had soon many on his hands. Foremost of all stood the Duchess of Somerset, whom he attacked at the close of this year in a poem called the *Windsor Prophecy*. The poem was printed and ready for publication when Swift stopped it at the earnest solicitation of Mrs. Masham, but not before it had been handed about and become currently known. It placed the coping stone on an enmity which had been growing for some time, and which now closed the door of court favour on Swift. In its bitterness of invective it outruns the usual fierceness even of Swift's pen: and the lady had a character and a history that made its strokes come home with deadly force.*

* Elizabeth, Baroness Percy, was daughter and heiress of Josceline, Earl of Northumberland, who died in 1670. When in her fourteenth year, she was married, in 1672, to Henry Cavendish, Earl of Ogle, the only son of the Duke of Newcastle. He died in 1680, and in 1681 she was married to Thomas Thynne of Longleat, a man of great wealth, who was friend to Monmouth, and has obtained a place in Dryden's "Absalom and Achitophel," as Issachar. The lady, then little more than a child, fled from her husband to Holland. In February, 168$\frac{2}{3}$, Thynne was assassinated in the Haymarket by foreigners, supposed to be instigated by Count Königsmark, who had paid his addresses to Lady Ogle before her second marriage, and who appeared in London ten days before the murder. Although he was acquitted on trial, the evidence against Königsmark was strong. It may be that the lady gave Königsmark false hopes: at any rate, he did not become her husband: but three months later, the girl of sixteen, whose experiences had already been sufficiently exciting, married Charles Seymour, Duke of Somerset, and became at a later day, as the confidante of Anne, an organ of political intrigue. Her red locks, that seemed so emblematic of her temper, were a favourite topic of satiric reference; but Swift does not hesitate to ascribe to her the more serious attribute of flagrant guilt.

The loss of old friends tried him more hardly, however, than the burden of new enmities. He had striven to keep Steele's post of Gazetteer for him, till his patience was broken by Steele's ungrateful vanity. He had sought a place for poor "Pastoral Philips," who was so prudently nursing his favour with the Whigs, as to disgust the Tories. He still clung to Addison: "no man," he says, "is half so agreeable as he," but he was stung to the quick when he found Addison not great enough to overlook party politics, and ready to assume a coolness in response to Swift's ready friendliness. For Congreve, Whig in sympathy, Swift secured the placability of Harley: "I have made a worthy man easy," he says, when he has finished the benefit, "and that is a good day's work."

But his life was too busy, the places of the old too quickly filled up by new friends, to allow him time to repine. At the table of Green Cloth he met the courtiers who could tell of the scandals that were rife when Charles II. was king; discussed schemes with the cautious and long-headed under-secretary, Erasmus Lewis; or mingled politics, art and literature, in his converse with the Court Physician, Arbuthnot, whom a sympathy at once of opinion, of humour, and of temperament, knit close to Swift. They pretended to have on hand a *History of the Maids of Honour*, which had no existence save in the imagination of Arbuthnot and Swift, but which served well enough as "a bite" to the ladies of the court. By a curious chance they found themselves pressing for the same appointment. Arbuthnot claimed a vacant captaincy for his brother: Swift had asked it for a friend. Arbuthnot waived the point: "he would not," says Swift, "wrong a friend of mine." Even thus early, Swift marked in simple words his opinion of Arbuthnot, as "a perfectly honest man." It was a eulogy Swift bestowed on few.

For Stella's behoof, he gives in the Journal some graphic pictures of the life at Windsor. He tells of the hunts in Windsor Park, which the Queen followed "in a chaise with

one horse, which she drives herself, and drives furiously, like Jehu, and is a mighty hunter, like Nimrod." Elsewhere he gives a picture of an autumn day's employment at the court. They formed "a noble caravan" for an outing in the Park. The Duchess of Shrewsbury was there in her one-horse chaise, with a troop of ladies of honour. The Duke, Mrs. Masham's husband, and two or three others, with Arbuthnot and Swift, were on horseback. This and that mishap turned up, till they were as hard put to it, as in the rides about Trim that Stella knows so well: and Swift himself "in his coat of light camlet, faced with red velvet, and silver buttons," had much talk with the Duchess. The story of Swift's life is dark enough to make these glimpses of tinsel not unwelcome.

But Swift's position as he was helping to build up the ministerial policy, threw him perforce into contact with others, with whom he cared less to deal. The ministers had amongst their supporters some whose claims it was not very convenient to recognise. The noisy divine whom Godolphin's fatal error had, a year before, made the hero of the hour, now claimed his reward. If it was useless to ignore the debt, it was still troublesome to recognise it. Swift, more than the ministers, felt the obligation, much as he disliked the man, and little sympathy as he had with the extreme opinions of which Sacheverell had been the noisy exponent. The ministry, indeed, "hate Sacheverell, as mortally as Sacheverell hates them:" but Swift forces an avowal of the debt: and it is paid for the present by a post given to Sacheverell's brother. But "he shall be none of my acquaintance," says Swift, as he strikes off the score which Sacheverell had managed to run up against his patrons.

Amongst the new circle in which Swift now moved, none was more remarkable than Lord Peterborough.* That brilliant

* It was about this time that Swift addressed to Lord Peterborough, whose previous title was Earl of Mordaunt, the well-known verses:

"Mordanto fills the trump of fame,
The Christian worlds his deeds proclaim,
And prints are crowded with his name.

"In journeys he outrides the post,

genius, whose life repeats, in the prosaic days of Queen Anne, all that was fabled of the age of knight-errantry, was in London for a few weeks at midsummer, spending in uneasy leïsure, one of those intervals between the coruscating flashes of energy with which he was wont to astonish Europe. During his absence Swift had been his constant correspondent: and at home was his constant companion. Formerly a Whig, his eccentricities had first driven him outside of the charmed circle of the Whig clique. His former associates had criticised severely his conduct of the war in Spain. His vanity wounded, his achievements wasted, his honour questioned, he had turned violently against his accusers; and Swift's influence had helped to bring him into the opposite camp. "He has abundance of good qualities," says Swift; "we love each other mightily."

As the nights drew in, Swift's visits to Windsor ceased: and the more critical aspect of affairs required his constant attendance in town. From Suffolk Street he moved to St. Martin's Street in Leicester Fields: and thence, a month later, to Panton Street in the Haymarket. Each lodging has some story connected with it that makes his surroundings real for us. In Suffolk Street, he is bored by the presence, in the same lodgings, of one Tisdall, of Dublin,* who has come over to London with his wealthy wife. In the opposite house, another Dublin acquaintance, Dick Tighe, was staying with his wife, and their connubial strife amused the neighbours. But Swift found town dull in these autumn months, and was glad to escape at times to the better company that greeted him in Lord Peterborough's gardens at Parson's Green.

Sits up till midnight with his host,
Talks politics and gives the toast.

"Knows every prince on Europe's face,
Flies like a squib from place to place,
And travels not but runs a race.
* * * *

"A skeleton in outward figure,
His meagre corpse, though full of vigour,
Would halt behind him, were it bigger.

"So wonderful this expedition,
When you have not the least suspicion,
He's with you like an apparition."

* This was *not* Stella's former lover, Dr. Tisdall of Belfast, but a well-known citizen of Dublin, whose ambition, at a later day, to be M.P. for Trinity College, Dublin, was opposed by Swift.

Before we deal with Swift's part in the critical stage of the ministerial policy which was drawing near, there is another stream, now joining the main current of his life, which calls for notice. His acquaintance with the Vanhomrigh family was now of some standing. Their neighbourhood in Bury Street had led to an interchange of small civilities, and this had ripened into an intimacy, scarcely heeded by Swift, but to have dire effect on another's fate. There was one amongst his friends who had an eye keen enough to see probable danger. This was Mistress Anne Long, lately the reigning toast, but now with broken health and fortune, pursued by bailiffs, and compelled to take refuge, under a borrowed name, at Lynn in Norfolk. It is in a letter from Norfolk that she speaks of Miss Hessy Vanhomrigh, and shows a woman's keenness in detecting what others seemingly ignored. Swift had spoken of some attachment which Miss Hessy Vanhomrigh seemed to have formed for one Hatton: but Mistress Long ventures to doubt its truth. If so, she says, "She is not the girl I took her for: *but to me she seems melancholy*." We can hardly doubt what that melancholy meant: as little can we doubt that Mistress Long had divined its meaning. Did she intend to convey a hint to Swift of that which was not noticed, till too late?

Before we leave Mistress Long, there is a last scene in her life, not without interest for those who would understand the heart of Swift. In one of those little memorandum books which contain his accounts and jottings of his movements, there occurs the following note:

"Dec. 22, 1711. On Saturday at four in the morning, dyed Mrs. Anne Long, at Lynn in Norfolk, where she had retired about two years before, and lived under the name of Smyth. The news of it came on Monday night following, which was Christmas Eve: and I heard it on Christmas day at noon, which was Tuesday. She was the most beautiful person of the age she lived in, of great honour and virtue, infinite sweetness and generosity of temper, and true good sense."

J. SWIFT.

Even in the Journal, Stella had to hear Swift's regrets.

His Christmas day, he says, is saddened by the news. "I was never more afflicted at any death. . . . In her last letter she told me she hoped to be easy by Christmas: and she kept her word, although she meant it otherwise." Her friends proving selfish, Swift himself wrote to Lynn, giving directions for her burial, and undertaking to erect to her a simple monument. If Swift's nature was unduly cynical, at least it needed no device but misfortune, to melt that cynicism into pity.

Such was Swift's life, and such his surroundings during these months. One subject is noticeable only by its absence. He presses no claim for advancement on his own behalf. In a curious letter of September in this year, Archbishop King gives the well-meant but blundering advice, that Swift should leave his present pursuits, should take to religious writing, and should look to his advancement in life. He may write something, the Archbishop thinks, "both profitable and agreeable above most things that pass the press." "In Dr. Wilkins' *Gifts of Preaching*," the letter runs: "Swift may find a catalogue of useful subjects yet untouched." It is strange that a man, accustomed to associate with Swift, should not have seen the inaptness of this solemn trifling. Swift resents it: but he does so with singular dignity, and with little show of anger. As to his fortune, "I shall never be able," he says in his reply, "to make myself believed how indifferent I am about it." When his work was done, Swift might claim what was no favour, but his due. But now, he has put his shoulder to the wheel, and though he grumbles at times, he has no thought of the reward. "I am half weary of them all," he says to Stella in October; "I often burst out into these thoughts, and will certainly steal away as soon as I decently can. I have many friends and many enemies: and the last are more constant in their nature. I have no shuddering at all to think of retiring to my old circumstances, *if you can be easy*."

Swift returned to town on the 8th of October, to renew the

active fight on his patrons' behalf. The weariness of the war had now deepened into disgust. The heavy taxes were ruining trade: bankruptcies were numerous: farms were tenantless: recruits were scarcely to be found. The nation was irritated by the feeling that it had been deceived. The allies showed undue anxiety at the prospect of peace. Foreign ministers were amazingly interested in our domestic politics: the Whigs were amazingly intimate with the Ministers of foreign powers.

All these circumstances alike pointed to the expediency of closing the war: and for this, Swift now gave his help. But alongside of it, there were certain additional features in the ministerial programme, to which it was his business to give special prominence. The political alliances of the dissenters were, if possible, to be broken: the Church was to acquire new strength: Presbyterianism was to be curbed in Ireland: and episcopacy was to be encouraged in Scotland.

In England, an appointment made this autumn recognized almost forgotten claims on behalf of the Church. The office of Privy Seal was vacant: and in August it was conferred upon Dr. Robinson, Bishop of Bristol, and Dean of Windsor. The most sanguine might dream that the days of Wyckham and Waynflete were to return. "All the friends of the present Ministry," says Swift, "are extreme glad, and the clergy above the rest. The Whigs will fret to death to see a civil employment given to a clergyman. It was a very handsome thing in my Lord Treasurer, and will bind the Church to him for ever."

In Ireland all seemed favourable to the views Swift had at heart. The reception of the Duke of Ormond, as Lord-Lieutenant in place of Wharton, had proved how strongly the reaction against the Whigs had affected Ireland. At Ringsend, when he landed, the gentry flocked in crowds to meet him: the Dublin mob greeted him with shouts for Church and Queen, which served no less as a reflection on his predecessor than as a compliment to himself. When Parliament met, Lords, Commons, and Convocation, joined in loyal

addresses. The most rigid of Tory Churchmen, the quondam defender of Sacheverell, Sir Constantine Phipps, was appointed Chancellor: and save for a remnant of Whiggism in the corporation of Dublin, the world of Ireland seemed transformed.

In Scotland, the ministers found their supporters almost embarrassing in their zeal. Toryism, there, was only too likely to take the guise of Jacobitism. The Union was still looked back upon with bitter hatred. Presbyterianism was regarded by many of the country clergy, with profound dislike. We are told by a good Presbyterian authority* that two-thirds of the people were still, at heart, adherents of the Episcopal form. Even amongst the Presbyterians themselves there was a strong leaven of those who rejected the traditions of the Covenanters, and who anticipated the views of the Moderates, so powerful a generation afterwards. The prevailing current of opinion soon enabled the ministry to take steps to gratify those with whom Swift sympathized.†

Resting thus upon a considerable basis of popularity, and with the hopes of their adherents emboldened in each of the three kingdoms, the ministry were ready to press forward the peace. Negociations were already in train, when the long-expected fall of Bouchain took place. It was the signal for a renewal of the paper war. Was the long delayed success an argument for peace, or was it a reason for renewing our flagging efforts in the war? Dr. Hare, the Duke's chaplain, a busy and pragmatical divine, began the contest. Preaching before the Duke, he urged the absolute sinfulness of not continuing the war, and the perverse neglect of Heaven's gifts which it involved. Swift and his "understrappers" straightway took up the task of a reply. It came as a "Comment on the Sermon," the work of the same not very worthy coadjutor

* Dr. Alexander Carlyle of Inveresk.

† How much their action in favour of Episcopacy in Scotland, and in restoring the right of patronage in the Presbyterian Church, gratified Swift, may be seen in the Third Book of "*The History of the Four last Years of the Queen.*"

who had written the pamphlet on Guiscard's attempt, poor Mrs. Manley of the New Atalantis; but though Swift disclaims all part in this and the tract which followed it, there can be little doubt that the plan and the arguments were largely suggested by him. A pamphlet followed, fulsomely laudatory of the Duke's achievement in forcing the lines of Bouchain: and this was answered, nominally by Mrs. Manley, in "A Vindication of the Duke of Marlborough." It affects to defend the Duke against pretended champions, whose complaints are said to be no better than libels on his character. They complained of his neglect, of his loss of power, of the nation's ingratitude: does not this, argues the Vindication, shew a desire to convict the Duke of unbounded ambition, of base ingratitude, of insatiable avarice? From charges like these the writer affects the desire to clear the Duke: but contrives, in each new paragraph, to afford new proofs of their truth.

Then setting aside the purely personal question, the pamphlet turns to discuss the war. How long, it is asked, are we to fight? Till we have lost a battle? or till we have completed our tale of victories by one that will crown them all? If we are to wait for a crowning victory, is Bouchain a proof that we are advancing from our achievements at Hochstadt and Ramillies, at Lille and Tournay? In dwelling on this last paltry success, do we not shew something of the blind adoration of a mother for her latest born, whose defects are condoned in the thought that he must be the last? Dr. Hare had lamented the proneness of men to lapse from perseverance in continued effort. But there are limits to the possibility of perseverance. The most ardent hunter must rest when his legs refuse to carry him further. Be our will what it may, if we go on much longer with the war, we shall have nothing left to fight for. In the camp, you do not feel its pressure, with your elaborate luxury and your ample pay. But we feel it, in the growing lists of bankrupts, in the empty shops, in the untilled farms, in the beggared landowners around us.

The stock-jobbers rejoice, because to them the burdens of the nation are a source of wealth. But their joy is no guide for national policy.

In the "Comments on the Sermon," it is hinted that the present ministers might have reaped as much glory as their predecessors from the war, had they been content to postpone the interests of the nation to their own. But this was not Swift's private opinion: and if he suggested the hint, it is only another instance of what his biographer must admit to be a characteristic of his political tracts. Strictly accurate in any private account of a transaction or of a fact, his controversial conscience was yet elastic enough as to the weapons he employed in fight. In this instance, as both his letters and his journal shew, he was clearly of opinion that upon the Peace the ministry must stand or fall. If war continued, Marlborough and the Whigs would be supreme.

The negociations were now actively set on foot: and, already, while the evident intentions of the ministers were being canvassed on all sides, an incident with which Swift became, in a certain way, connected, had occurred. His friend Prior had, in June of this year, been entrusted with what was meant to be a secret mission to the Court of France. But as ill-luck would have it, when Prior landed at Deal on his return in August, he fell into the hands of a fussy official, by whom he was detained for instructions: and meanwhile the secret was out. The same messenger that carried the request for instructions from the Secretary, seems also to have conveyed information to the leaders of the Whigs. The Government were thus driven into a more open avowal of their intentions as to a Peace. The "Post-boy,"* now the official paper, threw out surmises as to its possible terms, which were intended, by their suggestions, to draw out the opinion of the people.

It was necessary, however, to meet the talk about Prior's

* Opposed to the "Protestant Post-boy," which, edited by Abel Boyer, became the organ of the Whigs.

journey, and this Swift set himself to do. Summoning his printer, he dictated at a sitting a mock account of the journey, professedly translated from the French. The pamphlet has just that amount of banter skilfully mixed with serious purpose, that left men ten times more mystified than before. The story is put into the mouth of a valet, whose pride makes him assume the guise of secretary to his Excellency the Plenipotentiary, while he is made to reveal the flunkey at every turn. Nothing could better cover the gossips with ridicule: and the digressions, which were unavoidable with such a narrator, served for the side touches that were meant to tell. Scraps of conversation, picked up by eavesdropping, are retailed in order to hint that Prior had been straining for terms as severe as would have been asked by the most warlike of the Whigs. Nothing proves the success of the pamphlet better than that, while the gossips were mystified, Prior felt his dignity wounded at the semblance which the story bore to truth.

As irritation against the allies grew, so feeling gravitated in favour of the Peace. But the opposition was formidable: and it was swelled by others than the Whigs. Nottingham, whose rigid but respectable obstinacy had been a thorn in the side of one government after another, now stood out against the Tory peace. He was toasted in Whig companies, and was assured that it was "he would save England at last." Shrewsbury, the "King of Hearts," whose popularity was a tower of strength, joined Nottingham's standard of revolt. They allied themselves with the Whigs: and this strange confederacy was paid for by the Whigs agreeing to revive the much-decried Bill against Occasional Conformity, under the new title of a Bill for preserving the Protestant religion. Amongst all the strange twists of politics in these months none was more curious than this. Swift's part in what followed was characteristic.

The expedient which this strange alliance attempted was one so intricate, and at the same time so hazardous, as to be hardly credible. Oxford, it was hoped from his known moderation,

would be so far alive to the evils of the Bill, as to oppose it, and, by so doing, to break the alliance between himself and the extreme Tories. That alliance it was the chief object of the Whigs to break. But they miscalculated their forces, even though they had allies on whom they could scarcely have counted. The Dissenting clergy, it appears, consented to the project of reviving a Bill that would deprive their sects of the only loophole from civil disabilities, in the hope of outwitting the Ministers. They overshot the mark. When Parliament met soon after, both houses accepted the Bill: and the dissenters were forced at last to appeal for aid to Lord Oxford, against whom they had conspired. The reply to their appeal was entrusted to Swift: and nothing could have given him an opportunity more according to his taste. He disliked the Dissenters as a body with intense consistency: he was not sorry to see them caught in a noose of their own tying: but still more he despised the hypocrisy which had brought them as suppliants to the feet of the man whom they had sought to overthrow. The letter is a mixture of reproof, and sarcasm, and contempt. He disdains to make use of the opportunity, which perhaps might have been open to one more versed in the tricks of politics, of currying favour with an important class. He launches out against them as "Epicureans in act, puritans in profession, politicians in conceit;" "Poor deluded creatures, that have for seventeen years been acting against all their principles, and the liberty of this nation, without leaving so much salt as to keep the body of them sweet." The manœuvres of which they have been guilty are mercilessly exposed before their own eyes: and without one word of conciliation, the Lord Treasurer tells them roundly, that he will act only as justice guides him, without one thought of their solicitations or of their schemes. Deliberate sarcasm seldom enters so fully into what was virtually a state paper, as it does into this letter drawn up by Swift.

But the dissenters formed only one contingent of the

confederacy. To meet another member of it, Lord Nottingham, the best weapon was ridicule: and Swift in his "*Hue and Cry after Dismal*"—the name which Nottingham's gloomy face and still gloomier disposition had won for him—supplied the needed weapon. Advertisements were issued offering a reward of ten shillings for "information that might lead to the recovery of a very tall, thin, swarthy complexioned man" who had "been seduced to follow ill courses." The attack was the more hearty, as Swift really believed that there was corruption at the root of the scheme. In the Journal, he expresses his certainty that Nottingham had actually been bribed.

Late in the autumn appeared what was the most important contribution to the controversy that was dividing the nation. This was Swift's "*Conduct of the Allies.*" From the Journal, we can tell pretty accurately the time during which he was at work on it. On the 30th of October, he seems to have been only beginning. Official papers were at his disposal: but a mass of evidence had to be sifted: motives had to be placed in a clear light: arguments had to be marshalled in the most effective order: and the issue before the nation had to be made so plain that he who ran might read. But complicated and delicate as was the task, the pamphlet was published on the 27th of November; in a week it had run through four editions: and December was not well begun, before a mass of feeling had been stirred to the quick by the teachings of Swift's words. It was in the mouths of men: it changed the aspect of the party struggle: it became a storehouse of arguments: it was quoted in the Parliamentary debates. No pleasure was to Swift so great as that of the sense of power which the reception of such a pamphlet, at such a crisis, gave.

It was not in his nature to treat with elaborate minuteness the details of statistical facts. They have no fascination for himself, and he knows they will be worthless for the purposes he has in view. But although details are never allowed to be

cumbrous, it is perfectly evident that Swift, in preparing the pamphlet, has sifted evidence, examined treaties, made himself master of official documents, to an extent never equalled in any other of his works. And yet to the rapid composition of the book is due much of its sustained and telling force. He writes under the impulse of one strong mood of indignation, which has no time to vary or calm down; and it is his special strength to infect his hearers with the same heat of anger. Impressed with the sense of the wrongs under which the nation labours, he appeals against the folly that mistakes "the Echo of a London Coffee-house" for the "Voice of the Kingdom." We have gone wrong far too long: we have endured two wars of ten years each, for objects that were not our own: if we wait for five years longer, our ruin will be complete. We have been principals where we should at most have been auxiliaries: we have fought where we should not, and have abstained where our interests were at stake: we have allowed our allies, who charge us with deserting them, to falsify every engagement which they made to us. We have endured the struggle: but it has been by mortgaging the nation, till we are burdened with fifty millions of debt.* We have taken cities; but each has cost us six millions: and they have been won for our allies, not for ourselves. We have gained victories, but they have brought us barren renown: and now we are "expiring of a hundred good symptoms."

With marvellous skill, then, he shows that the nation was pursuing war in a spirit of blind and lethargic folly: and that the energy which indignation would rouse, should be spent not in prosecuting war, but in shaking ourselves free of the thraldom of misguided counsels. It would have been comparatively easy to rouse an energetic impulse to war: it required far more art to rouse that energy to the making of peace:

* The debt, he hints, was a vile contrivance of Burnet's, to prop up a shaky throne by making it the interest of creditors to preserve the continuity of a government which owed them money.

to shew the nation that in ending the war it was proving its vigour; in continuing it, was proving its slavish and inert subservience to a selfish clique. But this is just what Swift does. Having shewn the ruin that stares the nation in the face if war goes on, he next makes political capital out of the causes that he assigns for its prosecution thus far—the rapacity of Marlborough: the sordid greed of the monied class, who batten on the nation's sufferings: and the anxiety of the Whig clique first to obtain, and then to cling to, their employments and offices. The rapacity of Marlborough he exposes freely enough, but yet with an affectation of touching it lightly, as a personal matter which he will not press. The monied men he boldly repudiates in the name of his party, and throws upon the Whigs the burden of an unpopular alliance. He rejoices that the accession of a Tory ministry produced a fall of credit: "it seemed," he thinks, "as if the young extravagant heir had got a new steward, and was resolved to look into his estate before things grew desperate, which made the usurers forbear feeding him with money as they used to do." The selfishness of the Whig place-hunters makes them blind to miseries they do not suffer. "I have heard a man very sanguine upon the riches of England, with a good employment for life, and a hundred thousand pounds in the funds, bidding us take courage and warranting that all would go well. This is the style of men at ease, who lay heavy burdens upon others, which they would not touch with one of their fingers." In almost exactly the same terms Swift spoke twenty years later, against the selfish place-holders, who were blind to the ills of Ireland.

Just before the pamphlet was published, Marlborough, whose name was a terror to Swift and his patrons, came back to London in November (1711), to become the active centre of Whig intrigue. Just at this moment the suspicions of danger from such intrigue had been increased. For the anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's birth, a procession, it was ascertained, had been

organized by the Whigs, to revive the memory of Shaftesbury and his apprentice-boys, and of the days when triumphant Whiggism had dictated to the throne. Swift, in the Journal, hints that the scheme was more ridiculous than dangerous: but he did not scruple to help the government by denouncing the motives of its concocters. In a pamphlet published at the time he hints at plots for assassination, and aims a side hit at Marlborough in a suggestive allusion to Masaniello of Naples. The scheme was all the more heartily denounced by Swift, in as much as some, like Garth and Steele, who had assumed the right of passing judgment on what they held to be Swift's apostacy, were thought to be concerned in the device.

But when Parliament met on the 6th of December (1711), the real brunt of opposition had to be met. Nottingham led the attack in the Lords, and strove to pin the government to certain terms which were intended to wreck the project of peace. Oxford raised an objection of form: his own colleague, the Duke of Buckingham, jealous of his chief, set aside the point. The House was in the mood that makes a false step fatal—a mood much like that which makes the wolves dog the footsteps of a tottering horse. Nottingham's clause was carried by 61 voices to 55.

The danger was undoubtedly great: and to Swift it appeared overwhelming. But Oxford possessed—and it was perhaps one of the chief grounds of Swift's admiration—a stony apathy that passed for calmness. He showed no loss of nerve: while Swift regarded the game as lost, was already counting the penalty that the losers would have to pay, and feared, in prospect, that fall which, when it came, left him resolute and unshaken. He longed for a possible retreat from the storm. He knew the exasperation that he had provoked. He was vexed by the remissness, and the perverse wrangling of the ministers; he was plagued by the utter smallness of the aims, the pettiness of the intrigues, the ignoble self-seeking, that were spoiling all.

For three weeks the suspense lasted. But safety came to the government from the gradual decline of Marlborough in popularity with the nation. He and his secretary Cardonnel, were proved to have received commissions for which the precedent was doubtful, and for which even precedent could scarcely serve as a defence. Oxford followed up the blow. On the 30th of December, Marlborough was deprived of all his appointments, and on the 31st, a majority was secured in the House of Lords by the creation of twelve new peers.

At once the ministry and their supporters breathed more freely. Nothing could have been more complete than the Whig collapse. To all appearance the cause to which Swift had attached himself, the cause for which he had fought so well, had a long triumph before it. How long that triumph lasted, and what was Swift's reward for the part he had in securing it, has next to be seen.

CHAPTER X.

THE TORY TRIUMPH AND SWIFT'S REWARD.

January, $17\frac{12}{11}$, to June, 1713.

ÆTAT. 44—45.

Better prospects of Swift's friends—Misgivings after the fight—His discernment of the weak points of his friends—Delicacy of his position—His power of dispensing favours, and his use of it—King, Barber, Tooke, Mrs. Manley, Diaper—Bitterness of Party—Prince Eugene's visit—The Peace drawing nearer—The fury and the fears of the Whigs—The Mohawks—"*Hannibal at our Gates*"—Symptoms of Disunion—*Letter to the October Club*—Hostilities stopped—Swift's loneliness amid society—His illness—The Preliminaries announced—St. John created Viscount Bolingbroke—The Paper Tax—*The Last Four Years of the Queen*—The Bandbox plot—The Duke of Hamilton's death—Swift's sympathy for his widow—Lady Ashburnham's death—The end of Harrison—The *Proposal for improving the English Tongue*—Its literary aim—The Peace of Utrecht—Swift's reflections thereon—He claims his reward—Negociations with the Ministers—Swift gazetted as Dean of St. Patrick's—His quarrel with Steele—Quits England for his new post—Installed as Dean.

During the next eighteen months, Swift appears to us in a new light. We have seen him gradually drawn into closer contact with those who had assumed the reins of government. Wearied by the indifference of the Whigs, he had welcomed a change which promised well for his Church. There was something adventurous in the attack upon the solid phalanx of the Whig aristocracy which attracted his fancy. Personal feeling had done the rest: and almost without knowing it Swift had found himself the chief defender of a ministry whose future seemed to hang on a narrow issue. Lastly, the very attacks that were made upon his consistency gave him a new stimulus to the adopted task. Once he had begun the fray,

he found himself more and more persuaded of the rightness of his cause.

If the preceding months had been darkened by clouds, it would seem as if the horizon were now clearing. The ministerial policy became more firm. The secret negotiations through the Abbé Gualtier, the visits of Mesnager to England, and of Prior to France, were giving place to more decided steps towards securing peace. Now that the Ministers had summoned courage to create a majority in the Lords by calling up twelve new peers, their opponents seemed for the moment to be paralysed. When the Duke of Marlborough was dismissed, their chief danger was over. For weeks Swift had lived in dread: he had looked forward only to hiding himself at Laracor, and told Stella that the words of Wolsey were ever ringing in his ears, as those which it would be his lot to utter,

> "A weak old man, battered with storms of State,
> Is come to lay his weary bones among you."

In December, while his tract on "The Conduct of the Allies" had been selling by tens of thousands, his printer had been summoned by Chief Justice Parker* to answer for the publication, and Swift had seen in this action, the symptoms of that confidence which Parker felt in the downfall of the cause of which Swift had been the principal champion. But now, as suddenly, the aspect of things had changed. Marlborough, whose power was reckoned so secure that ministers had sought to temporize with him, had now fallen at their first firm act. The Duchess of Somerset still retained her place at court; but even her dismissal seemed only a matter of time.

* Chief Justice Parker, who had been one of the chief managers against Sacheverell, was appointed to succeed Holt before the Whigs lost power. Two years later, being present at a trial in the Court of Queen's Bench, Swift picked up and handed to Parker a pen which he had dropped. He had a mind, he says, to have told him that he returned good for evil: "for he would have taken mine from me." Journal, Oct. 28, 1712

Walpole, the late secretary for war, for whom Swift cherished an almost prophetic antipathy, was accused of malappropriation of public money and committed to the Tower.

Swift might have been pleased: but he was not. If the chief danger was over, the adventure which had given excitement to the struggle was also gone. Swift's hold of a successful cause always relaxed, as success seemed more assured, and the same may now to some extent have been the case. But he saw other dangers, perhaps, of no less gravity, in the future. Now that a foretaste of victory came, he hesitated, wavered, and lost hope. Fully persuaded of the necessity of the peace, he had felt no doubts in advocating it. He had pressed to the utmost a few salient points—the expense of the war, the burden on the nation, with its failing resources, and the selfish objects of the Dutch. The chief topics selected, in later times, both for the defence, and for the reprobation of the Treaty—the wide prescience of the commercial articles, by its advocates, and the abandonment of our allies in the Spanish peninsula, by its opponents—scarcely occupied Swift's attention. He kept clearly before him the object of gaining popular support for the policy on the realization of which he had concentrated all his efforts; and that popular support had to be won by arguments the most easy to apprehend, and the most likely to rouse the personal predilections of his hearers.

But now he finds new difficulties in the way. A policy is not attained without gathering about it a crowd of subsidiary details: and perhaps, without admitting it to himself, Swift had his doubts about the capacity of his patrons, to carry the whole to fulfilment. He is uneasy about the means. The creation of the twelve peers, he says, "is an expedient I do not like, if we could have found any other." He has misgivings even about Marlborough's dismissal. "If the ministry," he says, "be not sure of a peace, I shall wonder at this step, and do not approve it at the best." He fears that the dismissal is the effect of the personal resentment of the Queen and Lord

Oxford: and "I do not love," he says, "to see personal resentment mix with public affairs." "Although I love him not," he says again of Marlborough, "I am sure now he is down, I shall not trample on him: I dislike his being out." He is vexed to the death by the inertness, the indecision, the shiftiness of the Lord Treasurer. He cannot but see the traits in his own patrons which laid them, in certain respects, open to ridicule, although personal regard made him try to close his eyes. Nothing can be more characteristic than his passing sarcasm on their reception of the death of his own chief enemy. "It is a good jest," he says a few months later than this, upon Godolphin's death, "to hear the ministers talk of him with humanity and pity, because he is dead, and can do them no hurt."*

This very clearness of vision was a torture now, as it ever was, to Swift. The keenness of his appetite for the controversy, the tenacity with which he held in his grasp the faults of his opponents, the personal attachment he formed for those whose defence he had undertaken, all kept him to his post. But he doubted the final issue of the contest, and despised much of the strategy pursued. He forced himself to fight: but it was with an underlying doubt of the work in which he was engaged.

All this told upon his character, slowly as it was attaining full ripeness. Each year deepened the bitterness of his cynicism as it added to his knowledge of what, in human nature, was worthy of contempt. He found his friends, like his enemies, striving less for principles than for place. Yet he saw that he had bound himself to a party, must bear attack as its mouthpiece, must look to it, and it only, for promotion. The position was to the last degree irksome for a character like that of Swift: and in the armour of apparent arrogance with which he covered himself, in the uneasy restlessness which, day by day, embittered his temper, we see the havoc that it wrought.

* Godolphin died in September, 1712.

But it would be absurd to suppose that this uneasiness, much as it haunted Swift, was with him always. No one was more ready than he to take what was pleasant in his lot: and that lot gave him the opportunity, in which he delighted, of helping his friends. Dr. William King,* that strange and thriftless specimen of a Tory wit, was by Swift's influence, made Gazetteer, a snug post of two hundred a year, which Steele's obstinacy had lost to him, and which King's idleness made him throw up before a year was out. Lord Rivers was now Master of the Ordnance in succession to the Duke of Marlborough: and through him again, Swift found a means of gratifying his bookseller and printer—Tooke,† and Barber ‡—for the danger they had incurred on his behalf. The place of Stationer to the Ordnance was vacant: Swift begged it for the two: and it was granted with the usual arts that a courtier uses towards those whose favour he designs to gain. "Dr. Swift," Lord Rivers assured Tooke and Barber, "had commanded him, and he durst not refuse it." Nor was a second place,§ which had generally been attached to the post, and was claimed by Tooke and Barber, refused to Swift's petition on their behalf. Another of Swift's helpers had been Mrs. de la Rivière Manley;‖ and she too claimed some

* As to this Dr. William King, see above, Chap. VI., p. 175, in connection with his attack on the *Tale of a Tub*.

† Of Tooke, we have seen something, in the correspondence relating to the Fifth Edition of the *Tale of a Tub*, with the Apology (1709).

‡ Barber owed to Swift's patronage at this time the opportunity of achieving commercial success and of amassing a fortune. He continued to be Swift's friend till death, and when he became Lord Mayor, in Swift's old age, he paid attention to Swift's recommendations in his own patronage.

§ To serve the ordnance with oil.

‖ *The Account of Guiscard's attempt on Harley:* the *Comment on Dr. Hare's Sermon*, and the *Vindication of the Duke of Marlborough*, and possibly in some other tracts. Though he used her as one of his "under-spur-leathers," Swift was not blind to the vices of her work. It is, he says to Addison, "as if she had about two thousand epithets and fine words packed up in a bag; and that she pulled them out by handfuls, and strewed them on her paper, where about once in five hundred times they happen to be right." (*Swift to Addison*, Aug. 22, 1710.)

reward. But it seemed as if she was soon to pass with her ribaldries and her frailties beyond the reach of help.

"Poor Mrs. Manley," he says, "the author, is very ill of a dropsy and sore leg; the printer tells me he is afraid she cannot live long. I am heartily sorry for her: she has very generous principles for one of her sort; and a great deal of good sense and invention: she is about forty, very homely, and very fat."—(Journal, 28 January $17\frac{1}{11}$.)

Other more respectable literary aspirants found a helping hand from Swift. One Diaper, the author of some Eclogues of the Sea, seemed to him to have promise enough to merit help. It needed, indeed, but little genius to win the kindly notice of Swift, and the reflection he makes on Diaper's appearance in the world of wits is amusingly characteristic of Swift's odd ignorance of his own place above the little circle and beyond the reach of its petty praises. "I hate," he says, "to have these new wits rise, but when they do rise, I would encourage them: but they tread on our heels and thrust us off the stage." Diaper, he says, is "a poor little, short wretch:" half parson and half wit: a curate in the country, but in town a loiterer in the tavern with a sword dangling at his heels. Swift finds no way of helping him, but to make him parson out and out, and to get a living for him from the Lord Keeper Harcourt. But pending this, he collects money for him at the Society, and carries it to the garret where the poor witling, that was treading on his heels, was lying sick and starving like so many of his kind.

Well-known as Swift had been before, the publication of the "*Conduct of the Allies*," had not only drawn upon him the attention of friend and foe, but had made him the aim of a hundred shafts. The less of principle that was involved, the more bitter became the antagonism of parties. Every incident served to bring it out in full relief. Early in January, the long expected visit of Prince Eugene to England, began, and in its course it produced a singular rivalry. By both sides

our victorious ally was *fêted* and dined: by the Whigs because they hailed him as the opponent of the Peace: by the Tories because they could not allow the belief to grow that one who shared the nation's triumphs was less honoured by Tory than by Whig. It was expected, Swift tells us, that forty thousand Whigs would meet him at landing, and renew their efforts at agitation defeated two months before. But, as it turned out, his arrival roused more of curiosity than political enthusiasm. The Ministry, now triumphant in all but the continuance of the Duchess of Somerset at Court, was proceeding with more resolution to the settlement of the Peace. The Duke of Ormond was sent to the seat of war in place of Marlborough; and it was distinctly understood that his task was to be, to hold his own hand and that of the Allies.* The Whigs fretted themselves to the quick, but fretted themselves in vain. Men fought with weapons that were strange even to the proverbial bitterness of such conflicts. Vehement as Swift was, his was not the most unscrupulous invective. Society was ranged, during these months, into two hostile camps, assailing one another not by sarcasm and contemptuous denunciation only, but by open charges of instigating to plots and riots and assassinations. Every alarm of the town was distorted into some machination of the Whigs: every rumour of civilities to the French was believed to imply a pervading Jacobite taint amongst the Tories. During March and April, the streets were disturbed by the worse than foolish escapades of the hell-rakes of the

* It was now that Swift wrote the *Remarks on the Barrier Treaty* (of 1709, by which we had bound ourselves to defend the Dutch frontier). This was followed by a second, and less known, pamphlet, called "*The Remarks on the Barrier Treaty Vindicated, in a Letter to the Author.*" This also has sometimes been ascribed to Swift: but Mr. Dilke (*Papers of a Critic*), on better grounds, supposes it to have been the work of St. John; and he shows that it contains a hint of a possible return to the Stuart line, provided that the Pretender were to become a Protestant: a scheme to which St. John seems to have been inclined, and which is consistent with the reserve of his statement, in the Letter to Windham, that no formed intention of a Jacobite restoration had *yet* obtained.

town, who were known by the names of Mohawks, or Hawkubites, the lineal descendants of the "Hectors," the "Muns," and the "Tityre tus" of other days. Swift compares them with the Houghers of Cattle in Ireland, whose exploits were familiar to him: but even the excuse of class hatred, or of antipathy of creed and of race, was absent in the case of the overfed insolents who now rendered the streets of London dangerous. Women were not safe from their cruelties: and he who was unfortunate enough to cross their path at night, seldom escaped without some mark, in a slit nose or ear, which he would carry to his grave. With apparently but little foundation, these coarse and bloodthirsty bullies were reckoned by the Tories to be bands organized by the Whigs. Swift, at least, accepts the common belief: and knowing how obnoxious he was to the other party, he was forced to spend money that he could ill spare on coaches, so as not to pass through the streets after dark on foot.

Meanwhile the peace was surely advancing. The chief guide in all the negotiations was St. John. Bishop Robinson and Lord Strafford—the former a careful man of business, the latter a man "of little capacity or literature, but immeasurable pride"*—were little else than mouthpieces of the Secretary at home. According to instructions, they kept up cordial relations with the envoys of France: and the fact was enough to redouble the denunciations of the Whigs. "Hannibal" it was said,† "was at our gates:" in other words, the ministers were in league with the Pretender. The knell of the Protestant Constitution, so they prophesied, was about to be rung.

Once aroused, this new note of alarm rapidly increased in strength. Swift tells us for himself, with indubitable sincerity, whatever may have been his accuracy, that there was no more

* Journal, Feb. 15, $17\frac{1}{11}^{2}$.

† This was the title of a pamphlet which had much vogue, and the forebodings of which were answered in another, under the title, "*Hannibal not at our Gates.*"

fear of the Pretender than there was of the Grand Turk. From first to last (and it may be well to clear up the point once for all) there is not a shadow of foundation for the idea that Swift did not abhor any thought of a Jacobite restoration, as strongly as the most fervid Whig.* To suppose otherwise would be to trust to the unsupported attacks of his enemies, against his own consistent declaration, against all probability, against the tenor of his expressions to his most intimate friends. At a later day the suspicion took definite shape †: but it was repudiated by Swift with an energy of indignation that it was not in his nature to have assumed from motives of expediency.

But although fears of Jacobitism did not make Swift uneasy, he is not so confident about other matters. He doubts the ability of the ministers to carry the peace. He hates this "driving everything to an inch." He longs for some decisive action. He dreads the trimming of the Lord Treasurer with the Whigs. He dreads the hesitation of the Queen. He dreads still more the ominous signs of disunion amongst the colleagues. He dreads the fanatical partizanship of the extreme Tories of the October Club. To meet this last, he prints a *Letter to the October Club*‡, in which the moderation of the Ministry is accounted for by vague intimations of difficulties that have to be avoided, of hindrances that lie in the way, of eventual rearrangement of matters such as would please the heartiest supporters of sound principles against the violence of the common enemy, the Whigs. Swift had here the task hardest of all—to prove to others the absence of

* An unlucky passage in the *Conduct of the Allies*, suggesting that the Dutch stipulations against the Pretender might take it out of the power of the Legislature to alter the succession, however much the necessities of the kingdom might require it, was interpreted by Chief Justice Parker as treasonable. Swift altered it in later editions: but it is clear that the passage, as it originally stood, instead of being favourable to the Jacobite claim, only affirmed more distinctly the right of Parliament to carry out a revolution destructive of hereditary right.

† See Chapter XII., p. 302, and the letter from Delafaye to Archbishop King there printed.

‡ See Scott's Swift, Vol. IV., p. 81.

those causes of disquietude, by which he was himself at the moment seriously disturbed.

Swift moved about amid a brilliant society, to all appearance the most successful of the throng—attended by suitors, the patron of literature, caressed by the great, the resort of all who had a cause to be advanced: and yet, amongst them all, with scarcely a friend whom he could count sincere. Before we condemn Swift for taking such a position, we must not forget what motives called him to it. The desire to play a man's part in shaping the results of a European war: the determination to aid in crushing a faction whose specious principles he believed to be a cloak for selfishness: the ambition to hold his own amongst those whom fortune had made great—these roused him to the work, and unswerving courage made him persevere. But his vision was too clear, not to show him how much there was of the contemptible in the stage on which he acted.*

During April he was further troubled by a tedious and painful illness which he calls the shingles. On the symptoms of it, he dwells with a detail sufficient to remind us that we are dealing with a man whose modes of thought were peculiar, and with an age when delicacy was not excessive, and when the modes of expression were those to which our own age is averse. The illness was only a short interruption to the activity of his pen. Besides the *Letter to the October Club*, he had written in February, the *Fable of Midas*, a short poem which ridiculed the avarice of Marlborough. As soon as convalescence came, in May, he was busy upon another pamphlet,† the object of which was to prove that

* "I cannot leave this place in prudence or honour. And I never wished so much as now, that I had staid in Ireland; but the die is cast, and is now a-spinning, and till it settles, I cannot tell whether it will be an ace or a six."

† *Some Reasons to prove that no one is obliged, by his principles as a Whig, to oppose the Queen; in a letter to a Whig Lord.*" The Whig Lord is supposed, on the authority of an MS. note by Charles Ford, to have been Lord Ashburnham, the son-in-law of Swift's friend and patron the Duke of Ormond.

under the guise of Whig principles, the leaders of the Whig party were seeking only to embarrass the Administration, and drive the ministers from office: that independence of thought and action, a real adherence to true Whig principles, and a thorough abhorrence of arbitrary power, were to be found, not amongst the opponents, but amongst the supporters, of the ministry. "We are Whigs," he virtually makes the Opposition say, "and as such we claim the assistance of all Whigs to oust the ministers, no matter what their principles are, and however near they come to our own." "Remain Whigs," say Swift's friends, "and profess as freely as you will your principles: but have loyalty enough to support us as the Ministers of the Queen, until we are proved to have acted against those principles that you profess." The pamphlet was followed up by another paper, which even more distinctly carried the war into the enemy's camp: it was a mock letter from the Pretender to Lord Wharton, which threw upon the prominent Whig the suspicion of Jacobitism so freely cast at the ministers.

At last success, which covers so many sins in politics, came to Swift's friends. On the 6th of June, the outlines of the peace preliminaries were announced; and they were accepted by the nation with a feeling of relief. From all parts of the country, addresses poured in, congratulating the Queen on the prospect of peace and the securities by which it was to be accompanied. Even Whigs sent in congratulatory memorials: and their ill-will was shewn only in the increased emphasis which they imparted to their iterations of confidence in the securities for the Protestant succession, which they felt sure Her Majesty would take.

On the 4th of July, St. John, to whom the chief management of the Peace had so far been entrusted, and who was now to bring it to a conclusion, was ennobled by the title of Viscount Bolingbroke. By a fatal mistake he allowed jealousy of his rival's honours to persuade him to surrender his own vantage

position in the Commons. Even in the accomplishment of his wish he was doomed to disappointment: instead of gaining rank equal to that of Harley's earldom, he attained only to the inferior grade in the peerage. The slight that this implied probably vexed him more than the flimsy splendour of the title pleased him.

The last remnant of doubt as to the ministerial policy had passed away: and it was now deemed needful to check the utterances of those who attacked with too much boldness the course to which the Government stood committed. For every pamphlet that Swift or his understrappers had written, there had appeared a score of abusive replies: "If I wrote a pamphlet on a straw," says Swift, "I believe it would be answered by the score." Prosecutions had been tried, partly at Swift's own instigation*: but only with the natural result of inflaming the bitterness of the pamphleteers. Now the more efficacious machinery of a prohibitory tax was put in force. The tax—an impost of a halfpenny on each paper—began with August: and before the Act came into force, Swift prophesied that "Grub Street" had but ten days to live. A fortnight later he writes (Aug. 7th, 1712):—

"Do you know that Grub Street is dead and gone last week? No more ghosts or murders now for love or money. * * * The Observator is fallen: the Medleys† are jumbled together with the Flying Post:‡ the Examiner is deadly sick: the Spectator keeps up and doubles its price; I know not how long it will hold."

Meanwhile Bolingbroke had been received with lavish honours in Paris, as envoy for the completion of the Peace. A suspension of arms was signed in August: and a plenipotentiary had been named, in the person of the Duke of Hamilton, to arrange the final terms of the Peace. With

* Journal, Oct. 28th, 1712.

† The *Medley* was one of the Whig papers that had answered Swift's *Examiner*. Mainwaring had been its chief conductor.

‡ The *Flying Post* was the Whig paper, conducted by Ridpath, who has obtained a place in the "Dunciad."

singular recklessness, Bolingbroke contrived to give ground for the suspicions of the Opposition, by apparent familiarity with the Pretender: and amidst outcries against the betrayal of our allies and the tampering with our liberties, the Peace was drawing to its final stage.

In September, 1712, Swift, who had gone earlier in the summer to the Gravel-pits at Kensington, for change of air, moved for a time to Windsor, where the Court was now fixed, and where he always found his surroundings specially attractive. It was here that we must suppose he wrote the work to which in later days he gave the name of the *History of the Last Four Years of the Queen*.* Uncertain as we must be with regard to the date of particular references or passages in the work, yet it is not difficult to perceive, running through the whole, the spirit rather of the uneasy partizan, provoked at opposition and eager to invent calumnies against his opponents, than the ardour of the free champion who has no misgivings as to the cause which he defends. If the impression is correct, it only serves as an additional proof of the cloud of doubt and hesitation that surrounded Swift, not from any relenting to his opponents, not from any infidelity to the main aim of the ministerial policy, but from want of confidence in the resolution and the prudence of his friends.

When the ministers returned after the autumn recess, the business of the Treaty was again resumed; and the month of November was marked by two incidents that startled the town. One of these forms a strange comment on the tensity of party feeling. A band-box was sent to the Lord Treasurer: and Swift being in the room with Oxford at the time, undertook to open it. He did this with some care, and found two inkhorns (cases for ink and pens) filled with gunpowder, and containing bullets. The contrivance seemed at once too flimsy for a real attempt at assassination, and yet too serious for a mere practical joke. Whig lampoons attributed it to Swift's own con-

* See Appendix III.

trivance as a means of enhancing his favour with the minister. Such a theory is disproved by the very simple consideration that a self-contrived alarm would have sought more serious implements: to us, knowing Swift's real feelings to the ministers, and how lightly he held their favour, it is not only impossible, but absurd.

The other incident has in it so much of dramatic interest as to have formed a chapter in a classic fiction. The Duke of Hamilton and his Duchess were amongst Swift's intimates. The Duchess was then about thirty-three: "with abundance of wit and spirit . . handsome and airy, and seldom sparing anybody that gave her the least provocation, by which she has many enemies and few friends." So Swift writes of her: and this was a type of character not unlikely to attract him. Her husband was then at the height of power and influence, and august antiquity of race, aided by his talents, had acquired for him a foremost place in society. He had been named as Plenipotentiary to France, and had formed and expressed a desire that Swift should join his train. On the 30th of October, Swift had met him and received from him the friendly, though homely, compliment of a present of snuff. On the morning of the 15th of November, all the town was startled by the news that the Duke had, the night before, been stabbed in the back, after a duel in Hyde Park, where he had killed the already notorious Lord Mohun. The whole affair was involved in doubt and darkness. The duel, it was said, had arisen from some violent words used over a legal dispute—or such at least was the cause outwardly assigned: and when one of the principals had fallen, it seems to have changed into a general *mêlée*. Rightly or wrongly it was assumed by the Tories to have been another of the Whiggish plots.

To Swift fell, in great measure, the duty of combating the frantic grief of the Duchess. "It is not possible," he says, "for anybody to be a greater loser in all regards. She has moved my very soul." He saw it was useless to attempt, at

first, any assuaging of the passion of sorrow. "She never grieved," he says again, "but raged and stormed and railed." The first thing is to bring around her the friends whom her caprices and her bitter tongue had alienated. Her sister-in-law, Lady Orkney*—"the wisest woman," says Swift, "I ever knew"—is brought by him to visit her. "I am resolved," he says, "to make them friends: for the Duchess is now no more the object of envy, and must learn humility from the severest master, Affliction." It was in their sorrow, as much as in their prosperity, that such as she sought the aid of Swift. In their prosperity his wit and cynicism amused them: but, unlike most cynics, he had the tenderness that knew how to tutor grief.

Early in January, that same tenderness is roused by the death of Lady Ashburnham the daughter of the Duke of Ormond. She was "his greatest favourite," and his grief for the young life so suddenly snatched away moves that vein of almost despairing melancholy which was so easily stirred in Swift. "I hate life when I think it exposed to such accidents; and to see so many thousand wretches burdening the earth, while such as her die, makes me think God did never intend life to be a blessing." He cannot shake off the feeling of sadness: and yet, as is so common in the incidents of Swift's life, his sympathy with those on whom the bereavement has fallen most heavily, stands close to his perception of the odd guise in which even real sorrow sometimes dresses itself. The affectation of grief in Lady Betty Butler, Lady Ashburnham's sister, moved only his disgust. He was received by her with the ordinary ceremonial of affliction in the days of Queen Anne. "The jade was in bed in form, and she did so cant, she made me sick." But even the sincerer grief of the mother was not spared by Swift's morbid acuteness of vision. "There is something," he says, "of farce in all these mournings, let them

* Lady Orkney, whose connexion with William III. is well known, had married the younger brother of the Duke.

be ever so serious. People will pretend to grieve more than they really do, and that takes off from their true grief."

The blow is followed by another which touches Swift to the quick, although the victim was more humble, and though Swift's acquaintance dated merely from a year or two, and depended largely upon favours he had been able to bestow. We have seen the interest that he took in little Harrison: and he had managed to procure for him the promising post of secretary to the envoys at Utrecht. He had now come to London on some special mission, and Swift receives him as a son. But Swift finds that the promised salary had not been forthcoming, and that with the usual remissness of the Treasury in these days, "they have never paid him a groat though I have teased their hearts out." The "Queen's minister" was deep in debt: his rank obliged him to use a coach in his visits, and yet he had to borrow money for its hire. A few days later, Swift hears that the poor fellow has fallen ill: he begs and borrows money for him, and sees to his removal to the healthier air of Knightsbridge. The illness increases, and Swift cannot shake off, in the midst of his busy life, the concern he felt for the "poor lad," as he calls him. On the 14th of February, the end came: and it is best told in Swift's own words.

"I took Parnell this morning, and we walked to see poor Harrison. I had the hundred pounds in my pocket. I told Parnell I was afraid to knock at the door: my mind misgave me. I knocked, and his man in tears told me his master was dead an hour before. Think what grief this is to me. I went to his mother, and have been ordering things for his funeral, with as little cost as possible, to-morrow at ten at night. Lord Treasurer was much concerned when I told him. I could not dine with Lord Treasurer nor any where else; but got a bit of meat towards evening. No loss ever grieved me so much."

He is pestered in his own sorrow by the mother and sister, whose grief is outrun by their desire to profit by the death. It is characteristic of Swift that he looked back on his unselfish friendship for the unnoticed youth, as a folly rather than an act of kindness. "I shall never have courage," he says,

"again to care for making anybody's fortune." What others, more anxious for effect, would have represented as disinterested charity, Swift recognises in himself as only a weakness that courts superfluous care: and he avenges it on himself by the painful minuteness with which he sees to the just administration of anything that poor Harrison had left.

Amidst cares of politics, and grief for loss of friends, much of Swift's attention was occupied during this year with another subject. Early in the previous spring he had endeavoured to enlist the interest of the Lord Treasurer, who aspired to the fame of a literary patron, in a literary project which was bold enough, but which was strangely out of sympathy, not only with the genius of our language, but more than all with the terse idiom of Swift, moulded as that was by the very impress of his character.* He proposed the foundation of an Academy under the protection of the Queen and the ministers, which should take under its charge the regulation of the English tongue.† The hint was of course taken from the French Academy, from the style which had grown up under the patronage of the Grand Monarque, and from the example

* To a certain extent, the plan is anticipated in the *Tatler* (No. 230) which Swift wrote early in this visit to England, ridiculing the offensive style that was mutilating our colloquial, and even our written language. It is interesting to compare with this what seems to be a well-authenticated reminiscence by Mrs. Pilkington of his later days. "I would have every man," he says to her, "write his own English." She assents: but is roughly told, "I am sure you do not understand my meaning." "Very possible, sir," says she, "but I certainly understand my own." She explains it to be, "not to confine oneself to a set of phrases, but to make use of such words as naturally occur on the subject." "Hush," says he, "your husband is coming; I will put the same question to him." He did so: and Mr. Pilkington answered, "To be sure, a man ought to write good English." "Nay, but his own English: I say his own: what do you understand by that?" "Why, sir," said he, "what should I understand?" "Plague on you for a Dunce," said he: "were your wife and you to sit for a fellowship, I would sooner give her one than admit you a Sizar." (Memoirs, I., p. 118.)

† The title of the Tract was, "*A Proposal for correcting, improving, and ascertaining the English tongue, in a letter to the most honourable Robert, Earl of Oxford and Mortimer, Lord High Treasurer of Great Britain.*" It was the only piece to which Swift ever attached his name.

of the School of Boileau, which Swift had so closely studied. There was thus much of literary foresight in it, that Swift discerned the real lack in our literature which it was to be the business of his own contemporaries to supply. He conceived of it in a narrow way: he mistook the means by which it was to be accomplished. But he saw that literary effort, with no more solid guidance than the English taste prevailing in his own earlier years, would certainly end in hopeless confusion. He had seen the conceits and intricacies of the School of Cowley pass out of fashion. He had seen the taste which preferred the stilted affectation of the rhymed drama to Shakespeare, in its own turn pass away. He had wasted effort himself on the fantastic absurdities of the so-called Pindaric ode. But successive variations of taste had not improved our literary judgment. Some standard was needed, if the dunce were to be known from the genius, whose place he now usurped.

Scarcely a year before there had appeared a metrical essay on the rules of criticism, from one who, though little more than a boy, had a judgment ripe enough to select the indisputable commonplaces of criticism, and a command of language sufficient to secure for the selected maxims a permanent currency in the mouths of men. Swift must have read Pope's poem, and must have felt sympathy with its motive. Pope had attempted to lay down simple rules for the guidance of taste: Swift might well think, that if the work were to be complete, that also which had been done in France must be done here, and a standard of language imposed. Had he studied the sources of our language, had he considered its mingled elements, and noticed how these moulded idiom, he might have had less hope for his scheme. Fifteen years later, indeed, he was moved to an indignant protest against a French translator's critique on the barbarian genius of *Gulliver's Travels*. His respect for French rigidity may then have been modified; but now he feels so much interest in the scheme

as to make the Tract in its favour the one exception to the anonymity of his writings.

The beginning of April, 1713, at length brought the Peace. The treaty was then signed at Utrecht. Swift, if he did not receive the news with rapturous enthusiasm, yet could not but feel pleased at the success of the cause for which he had laboured. The dangers of the present, which were avoided by the peace, were indubitable. "And I do not find," he says to Archbishop King * a short time before, "that in public affairs, human wisdom is able to make provisions for futurity which are not liable to a thousand accidents. We have done all we can. For the rest, *curent posteri*." On the 28th of March, he again writes to King, with even more of an apologetic tone:

"After all, my Lord, I grant that from a distant view of things, abundance of objections may be raised against many parts of our conduct. But the difficulties which gave room to these objections are not seen, and perhaps some of them will never appear: neither may it be convenient they should. If in the end it appears that we have made a good bargain for you, we hope you will take it without entering too nicely into the circumstances. I will not undertake to defend our proceedings against any man who will not allow this *postulatum*, that it was impossible to carry on the war any longer: which whoever denies, either has not examined the state of the nation, with respect to its debts, or denies it from the spirit of party. * * * I hope, my Lord, we shall in time unriddle you many a dark problem, and let you see that faction, rage, rebellion, and revenge, and ambition, were deeply rooted in the hearts of those who have been the great obstructors of the Queen's measures and of the kingdom's happiness; and if I am not mistaken, such a scene may open as will leave the present age and posterity little room for doubt, who were the real friends and real enemies of the country."

Such were Swift's motives in the struggle: such his reflections on the result. How far they were justified it is for history, and not for the biography of Swift, to say. We are concerned only to see with what sincerity he bore his part in the contention of the day.

* Jan. 3, 1712/13.

The immediate result was a clear gain of strength to the Ministry. Men paused for the next move. Was it possible that Oxford contemplated, and might obtain, a coalition of the moderates of both parties? Faction held its hand to watch. But now Swift felt he had done his work: and now, if ever, the moment was come when he must claim his reward. Hitherto he had not been importunate: had refrained, indeed, from pressing his own advancement. He had grumbled occasionally in his Journal to Stella: he had doubted the solid advantage that might come from the lavish civility and the familiarity with which the ministers greeted him. "More of your lining, and less of your dining," he says, half angrily, half humorously. But now, self-respect demanded that he should be placed in a position, where the tongue of scandal might not assail him as a penniless priest, ready to do the bidding of a party on the flimsy chance of a reward. His help, if it were to be given longer, must be given from a standpoint of independence; and to secure this he must press his claims with some imperiousness. Were he to forego the claim now, his previous work would be discredited, his influence with the Ministry would be scouted, he would occupy the most contemptible of all positions —that of a castaway tool. He had to demand, therefore, from the ministers, either the fulfilment of their promises, or a statement of their intentions. He now knew, as is clear from the passage below, that the chief obstacle was in the Queen: and if the ministers found themselves powerless to remove the prejudice against him that the Duchess of Somerset and the Archbishop of York had inspired, he desires only to know it. At length the end came, as it is told in his own words.

April 13 (1713). This morning my friend, Mr. Lewis, came to me, and showed me an order for a warrant for three deaneries: but none of them to me. This was what I always foresaw, and received the notice of it, better, I believe, than he expected. I bid Mr. Lewis tell my Lord Treasurer, that I took nothing ill of him, but his not giving me timely notice, as he promised to do, if he found the Queen would do nothing for me. At noon, Lord Treasurer, hearing I was in Mr. Lewis's office, came to me, and said

many things too long to repeat. I told him I had nothing to do but go to Ireland immediately: for I could not with any reputation, stay longer here, unless I had something honourable immediately given to me. We dined together at the Duke of Ormond's. He then told me he had stopped the warrants for the Deans, that what was done for me might be at the same time, and he hoped to compass it to-night: but I believe him not. I told the Duke of Ormond * my intentions. He is content Sterne should be a bishop, and I have St. Patrick's: but I believe nothing will come of it. Stay I will not: and so I believe, for all you saucy p p t can say, you may see me in Dublin before April ends. I am less out of humour than you would imagine: and if it were not, that impertinent people will condole with me, as they used to give me joy, I would value it less. But I will avoid company, and muster up my baggage, and send them next Monday by the carrier to Chester, and come and see my willows, against the expectation of all the world. What care I? Night, Dearest Rogues, M.D.

April 14. * * * Lord Treasurer told Mr. Lewis, that it should be determined to-night: and so he will for a hundred nights. So he said yesterday, but I valued it not.

15th. Lord Bolingbroke made me dine with him to-night (I was as good company as ever) and told me the Queen would determine something for me to-night. The dispute is Windsor or St. Patrick's.

16th. Mr. Lewis tells me, that the Duke of Ormond has been to-day with the Queen: and she was content that Dr. Sterne should be bishop of Dromore, and I Dean of St. Patrick's: but then out came Lord Treasurer, and said, he would not be satisfied, but that I must be Prebendary of Windsor. Thus he perplexes things. I expect neither: but I confess, as much as I love England, I am so angry at this treatment, that if I had my choice, I would rather have St. Patrick's. * * *

17th. * * * The Queen says she will determine to-morrow with the Lord Treasurer. The warrants for the Deaneries are still stopped for fear I should be gone. Do you think anything will be done? I don't care whether it is or no. * * *

18th. This morning Mr. Lewis sent me word, that Lord Treasurer told him the Queen would determine at noon. At three Lord Treasurer sent to me to come to his lodgings at St. James's, and told me the Queen was at last resolved, that Dr. Sterne should be Bishop of Dromore, and I Dean of St. Patrick's. * * * I do not know whether it will yet be done: some unlucky accident may yet come. Neither can I feel joy at passing my days in Ireland: and I confess, I thought the Ministry would not let me go: but perhaps they can't help it. Night, M.D.

19th. * * * After dinner Mr. Lewis sent me word, that the Queen staid till she knew whether the duke of Ormond approved of Sterne for a

* The Duke, as still holding the office of Lord-Lieutenant, had a voice in the arrangement.

bishop. I went this evening, and found the Duke of Ormond at the Cockpit, and told him, and desired he would go to the Queen, and approve of Sterne. He made objections: and desired I would name any other deanery: for he did not like Sterne. * * So all is now broken again. * * This suspense vexes me worse than anything else.

It was only on the 23rd of April, that the Duke consented, and that the warrants were signed. Swift was vexed at the vacillation, at the strain which a return, so much under his deserts, had called for, and at the prospect that it opened of long, probably final, banishment to Ireland. The picture of timidity, shuffling, and ingratitude on the part of Oxford, is not a pleasant one. But so far as Swift was concerned, it would be unjust to view his claim as more than the self-assertion which his dignity required. We need not of course look, either in the age or in the man, for the unctuous expressions of disinterested motives with which it is occasionally the modern habit to garnish the natural satisfaction which ecclesiastical preferment brings. Swift had been careful not to choose his profession as a last resort; but once chosen, he looked upon his position in the Church rather as implying a code of discipline with which he was obliged to comply, than as involving a peculiar set of motives by which he was compelled to be animated. To rise in the Church was the sign of his influence: and that influence he was unwilling to surrender. Pride, much more than covetousness, prompted him to demand the satisfaction of his claim.

For the next few weeks Swift was occupied with preparations for his departure, with receiving congratulations from some, and expressions of regret at his going from others—including the ministers who were themselves its cause. The last weeks of his stay in London, saw him involved in a dispute with Steele, which showed both men in a characteristic light. On the 28th of April, Steele inserted in the *Guardian* an indignant protest against an attack made by the *Examiner* on Lord Nottingham, but more specially against a cowardly libel

on Nottingham's daughter in the same paper. He applied the word "miscreant," not unjustly, to the man who had allowed himself the licence of dragging a lady's name into a controversy where her father only was concerned. The protest was answered in the *Examiner*: and then on May 12th, Steele returned to the charge. This time he wrote in his own name to Nestor Ironside: and after various hits at the supposed author, he proceeds thus:—

"However I will not bear hard upon his contrition: but am now heartily sorry I called him a *Miscreant*: that word I think signifies an unbeliever. *Mescroyant*, I take it, is the old French word. I will give myself no manner of liberty to make guesses at him, if I may say him.* * * I have carried my point and rescued innocence from calumny; and it is nothing to me, whether the *Examiner* writes against me in the character of an estranged friend, or an exasperated mistress."

He then proceeds to hint not obscurely, at other productions by the same author, which answered to those ascribed to Swift. Enough was said, first, to identify Swift with the *Examiner*: next, to throw at him the common charge of scepticism: and lastly, to couple him with poor Mrs. Manley, whom Steele is not ashamed to describe as his own discarded mistress. Swift had in reality long ceased to have anything to do with the *Examiner*: and we can now tell that, at the moment, he was the last man in England to strain his honour in writing against the enemies of the Ministry, with whom he was not too well pleased just then. Steele can hardly have been ignorant that Swift's connection with the *Examiner* had ceased: and his subsequent conduct proves that spite, and not ignorance, prompted him in the accusation.

Swift took what he trusted was the easiest means of remonstrating. He wrote to Addison, disclaiming the charge, and accusing Steele of base ingratitude in making it. He asserts what his Journal shows to be true, that he had stood Steele's friend with the ministers, and prevented his dismissal from his post. The letter was clearly meant for Addison to deal with,

and it would not have been hard for Addison, knowing both men, to have composed the quarrel, by convincing Steele of the manifest wrong he had done. But once again, as he often did, that calm and regulated spirit refused to sully itself with other men's quarrels. He simply handed the letter to Steele, and left him to reply. Steele's answer was offensive, as only that of a weak and vain man could be. "They laugh at you," he says, beginning with the non-essential point—"if they make you believe your interposition has kept me thus long in my office." As for the charge he made he maintains that it was tempered with mercy out of forbearance for Swift. Swift's disclaimer he affects to treat as a mere trick that none but an Irishman would have attempted. With the assumed sneer of patronage, he congratulates Swift on his new promotion.

For this letter no defence is possible. If Steele believed what he wrote, there was no need to write at all: if he doubted its truth, as it is at least absolutely certain he had reason to do, he was carried away by vanity, and that spite which ingratitude breeds: if he knew it to be false, as is most probable, his conduct needs no comment. Swift replies in a letter, which indignation would certainly have made much stronger, had not the keen desire so characteristic of him, to clear away the calumnies of one who was once a friend, restrained his wrath. He explains what he had done, or had attempted to do for Steele, and closes his letter thus:—

"Be pleased to put these questions to yourself:—

"If Dr. Swift be entirely innocent of what I accuse him, how shall I be able to make him satisfaction? And how do I know but he may be entirely innocent? If he was laughed at only because he solicited for me, is that a sufficient reason for me to say the vilest things of him in print under my hand, without any provocation? And how do I know but he may be in the right, when he says I was kept in my employment at his interposition? If he never once reflected on me the least in any paper, and has hindered many others from doing it, how can I justify myself, for endeavouring in mine to ruin his credit as a Christian and a clergyman?"

To this Steele replies by a flimsy and conditional expres-

sion of gratitude for anything Swift may have done, and by boasting of his own independence and nobility of spirit. He closes with some words of what perhaps he lived to think somewhat high-pitched valour, but containing a reminiscence, which, extorted as it was from his spiteful vanity, confirms the impression of the singular attraction exercised by Swift.

"I do assure you, I do not speak this calmly, after the ill-usage in your letter to Addison, out of terror of your wit, or my Lord Treasurer's power: but from pure kindness to the agreeable qualities I once so passionately delighted in, in you."

To argue with illogical and irrelevant verbiage like this, was useless: and Swift closes the correspondence, on the eve of starting for Ireland, by simply re-stating the injustice of the charge, and the benefits that had been so gracelessly forgotten. His revenge, as we shall find, was not long delayed.

On Monday the 1st of June, Swift set out from London, riding in six days to Chester, which he reached on the 6th. He went on to Holyhead on the 8th, and reached Dublin on the night of Wednesday the 10th. On the 13th he was installed as Dean of St. Patrick's.

CHAPTER XI.

DISSENSION AND ITS FRUITS.

June, 1713, to August, 1714.

ÆTAT. 46.

Letter of greeting from Archbishop King—Swift's resentment at its tone—Need of him in London—Difficulties of the Ministry—Opposition to the Treaty—Urgency for Swift's return—His hesitation—Vanessa and her passion—Swift's attempt to soothe it—His discontent with Ireland—Return to England—The Prolocutorship—Attacks from all sides—Walpole's *Short History of the Last Parliament*—Swift to the rescue—Personal attacks—Discussion of the Treaty—Steele and *The Crisis*—The *Public Spirit of the Whigs*—The opening of Parliament—Fears of Jacobite Plots—Swift and the Lords—Steele's expulsion from the House—Dissensions in the Tory ranks—Amusements in the midst of danger—The *Scriblerus* Club—Swift retires to Letcombe—His life there—*Scriblerus* and his prospects—Pope's ambassadorial visit—The struggle between Bolingbroke and Oxford—The Schism Bill—Oxford's Memorial to the Queen—His fall—The illness of the Queen—Confusion in the Ministry—Shrewsbury Lord Treasurer—The Queen's death—Ruin of the Tories—*Note on the Wagstaffe Volume.*

JUST as he was about to start for Ireland, Swift had received a letter from Archbishop King which was scarcely likely to reconcile him to his new position. King and he still continued in a state of watchful, almost suspicious, friendliness. Their language to one another is that of respect and even of friendly courtesy: but it never deepens into any warmth of regard. The form which the Archbishop's greeting now took, made his regret for the loss of Swift's predecessor perhaps a little more prominent than was necessary: and began with exhortations which were perhaps a little premature.

"Your predecessor in St. Patrick's did a great deal to his church and house, but there is still work for you. He designed a spire for the steeple, which kind of ornament is much wanting in Dublin. He has left your economy clear, and £200 in bank for this purpose. . . . Bricks and lime are

good and cheap. But we have no workmen who understand anything of the matter. I believe you may be acquainted with several that are conversant with such kind of work, and, if you would discourse some of them, and push on the work as soon as settled, it might be of use to you, and give the people here an advantageous notion of you." *

Almost every phrase in the letter was gall and wormwood to Swift. His work was, forsooth, to be the completion of Sterne's design for a useless spire on the top of St. Patrick's tower! He was to use any time in London that was left him to take leave of statesmen and wits, in discussing the merits of bricks and workmen! And if he did this weighty work hopefully, he might give an advantageous notion of himself to the people of Dublin, for whose opinion he did not care a straw! And to crown all, the Archbishop speaks of St. Patrick's, not even as ordinary courtesy would have demanded, but as "the provision her Majesty has made for you." Swift answers by expressing his sense that his Grace's loss in Sterne will not be made up by him: and for the steeple, he has not much to say for it; "he is confident no bricks made in that part of Ireland will bear being exposed so much to the air."

We shall return to the surroundings of Swift in his new post, in a later chapter. Scarcely had he now left London, before his need was felt as sorely as he would have wished it to be. On the 2nd of June, indeed, Erasmus Lewis sends a cheerful letter to speed him on his way at Chester. The Ministry had just obtained a triumph. From the moment that the Peace was announced, the Opposition had exerted all their efforts to strike a blow at the ministerial credit, and they had apparently a majority in the House of Lords. Descending to the worst depth of faction, the Whig leaders had joined with the discontented Scotch, to procure a repeal of the Act of

* The letter is one which Dr. Mant has printed (*History of Church of Ireland*, II., 250), out of the mass of MSS. which Archbishop King left to Trinity College, Dublin. The illustrations thrown on Swift's life by the correspondence, seemed to be too slight and too scattered to justify the printing of further extracts in this volume.

Union. The division showed a tie: and it was only by the proxies that the ministers gained the day. But they did gain it: and this triumph Lewis announces to Swift as "the greatest victory we ever had." *

But the triumph was not lasting. On the 9th of July, Erasmus Lewis wrote as follows:—

"We are all running headlong into the greatest confusion imaginable. Sir Thomas Hanmer is gone into the country this morning, I believe much discontented: and I am very apprehensive neither Lord Anglesey nor he will continue long with us. I heartily wish you were here: for you might certainly be of great use to us, by your endeavours to reconcile, and by representing to them the infallible consequences of these divisions. We had letters this morning from Ireland. What is the reason I had none from you? Adieu. I hope your health is not the cause."

The difficulties were indeed serious enough. Besides the dispute between Oxford and Bolingbroke, there were other dangers. The Treaty of Commerce, which proposed a system approaching to free trade between England and France, required, as it dealt with finance, to be supplemented by an Act of Parliament. But the commercial and manufacturing class were wedded to protection, and utterly unable to understand Bolingbroke's liberal scheme as anything else than a conspiracy for destroying the trade of the country, and with it the monied class. Petitions poured in against it. Genuine panic joined with the bitterness of the Opposition faction. The committee on the Bill dragged its slow way through petitions and evidence: and at last, on the motion for reporting the Bill to the House, it was lost by a majority of 194 against 185. By nine voices, the Whig party were thus able to defeat the leading feature of Bolingbroke's peace, and to render abortive a scheme of free-trade, the first proposed in England, and devised by the bold genius of a Tory minister.

In these circumstances there was but one who could give the needed help. On the 30th of July, Lewis again presses Swift:

* *Lewis to Swift*, 2nd June, 1713.

"The Lord Treasurer desires you'll make all possible haste over: for we want you extremely." Swift made excuses and hung back. He was, perhaps, not unwilling that those who had parted from him so lightly should feel their loss. His reception in Dublin had not indeed been pleasant. He had been hooted in the streets, and libels had been fixed on the door of his own cathedral.* He had quickly left the city, and was now spending his time quietly enough, looking after his willows, and finding his only recreation in riding about the roads near Laracor and Trim in Stella's company; for the "St. Mary's Ladies" † had followed him to Trim, where their cottage was within a couple of miles of his vicarage, and close to the house of Raymond of Trim. He had longed for quiet: but now that he has attained it, he cannot avoid regrets at enforced obscurity: perhaps receives as not unwelcome the summons to the wider sphere that he had left.

There was, indeed, a new and personal cause of trouble to increase his perplexities and uneasiness. When he left London, he had found for the first time that a friendship begun with no other thought than that of kindly interest, had deepened into something far more serious. We have seen how his acquaintance with the Vanhomrigh family had ripened into intimacy, and how in the mind of Mistress Long,‡ at least, there had been some perception of its dangers. Esther Johnson may have had her doubts even thus early. So long before as March, $17\frac{1}{11}^{2}$, she had hinted surprise at his friendship with the Vanhomrighs, as people of no consequence: and Swift had playfully stood up for them, as keeping company equal to his own. So early as July, 1710, "Miss Essy," as she

* This seems the best-supported story: but Delany (*Observations*, p. 87) throws doubt on it: and possibly the adverse reception to which Deane Swift, in his Essay (p. 183) refers, may apply only to the time when Swift came back, the representative of a fallen Ministry.

† He gives this name to Esther Johnson and Rebecca Dingley, because in Dublin they lodged opposite St. Mary's Church, on the north side of the Liffey.

‡ See Chap. IX., p. 227.

was familiarly called by him, had written to Swift: and she wrote to him again in the next spring.* Since then the intimacy had increased. She had sought his guidance and help in her reading: he, on the other hand, had found in her society a relief from weightier cares. A language of familiar banter was used by Swift, perhaps with the purpose of leading her mind away from any graver thoughts: a language light and playful, but very different from that "little language," as they were wont to call it, that knit together the past memories of Stella and of Swift. With that lifelong bond, this new friendship never, even remotely, interfered. So little truth is there in the idea, first started by Sheridan, and from him rashly adopted by Scott, that professes to fix a date early in this year when the feeling for Vanessa made all expressions of warmth and endearment in the Journal give place to cold and business-like formality. But just as he started from London, Swift had found that Vanessa's feeling was something stronger than common friendship. He had written a short and kindly letter of adieu from St. Albans: and from Dunstable he wrote to the mother to tell of his progress, and to convey a few words of banter to both her daughters alike. But the replies from Vanessa, following quickly one upon another, became stronger and more impassioned. Every letter from him is prized: her whole anxiety is about his health. "I believe," she says, "you little thought to have been teased by me so soon . . . . but I had not self-denial enough to forbear." The mark, she says, is still in the book they were reading, where he left it. She wants to know about his new horse, Bolingbroke. She suffers tortures of anxiety till she can hear whether the pain in his head is better. Her passion already makes her letters broken and inconsistent.

"If I talk," she says, "impertinently, I know you have goodness enough to forgive me, when you consider how great an ease 'tis to me to ask these

* These two letters are known to have been received only by the entries in Swift's notebooks, now in South Kensington Museum.

questions. * * * Oh, what would I give to know how you do at this instant! My fortune is too hard, your absence was enough without this cruel addition. Sure the powers above are envious of your thinking so well, which makes them at times strive to interrupt you."

"If you think I write too often," she says again, "your only way is to tell me so, or at least to write to me again that I may know you don't quite forget me." Then follows the first word of what was perhaps the real secret of her uneasiness, in the thought that another's love was dearer to Swift than her own. "If you are very happy, it is ill-natured of you not to tell me so, except *'tis what is inconsistent with my own.*" For his behoof she has gathered what political news she could: she tells him of her reading: she links it somehow with their friendship: she strives to flatter him by describing how dire is the Ministry's need of his help.

Clearly the passion he had kindled was no matter for laughter, or for sport. With all his knowledge of human nature, Swift scarcely fathomed the depths of a woman's heart: and the very tenderness of sensitivity that underlay his rough coating of cynicism, tempted him to avoid any harsh or too decided step to crush out the flame he had kindled. He writes quietly, but not unkindly. He has, he tells her,* quitted Dublin, where he found but few friends. He has hidden himself down at Laracor, preferring "a field bed and an earthen floor before the great house there which they say is mine." "I told you," he goes on, "when I left England, I would endeavour to forget everything there, and would write as seldom as I could." He is not coming over till he is sent for: but he does not conceal from Vanessa the dreariness of his new life: perhaps, indeed, he sought rather to impress it on her mind.

"At my first coming," he says, "I thought I should have died with discontent, and was horribly melancholy while they were installing me: but it begins to wear off, and change to dulness. My river walk is extremely

* Letter of 8th July.

pretty and my canal in great beauty, and I see trout playing in it. * * * I am now fitter to look after willows and to cut hedges, than to meddle with affairs of State. I must order one of the workmen to drive those cows out of my island, and make up the ditch again; a work much more proper for a country vicar than driving out factions, and fencing against them."

Swift might well fancy that nothing was so likely as this to drive from Vanessa's heart what he thought was but a passing folly. To paint the hardships of his life as in strong contrast with the ease of her life in London, and with those cosy evenings that he speaks of when they drank coffee in "the sluttery;" to show her his humdrum occupations, so different from those that attracted her vanity when she felt herself the companion of one who guided ministers, and shaped treaties, and struck terror into his foes,—these were the methods by which Swift hoped to cure poor Vanessa of her foolish love. The plan succeeded no better than any one of the schemes for curing passion which those who do not enter into its intensity are so ready to attempt.

The dulness with which Swift tried to frighten Vanessa, really weighed heavily on him. The thought that he was dismissed as a discarded tool, gnawed him at the heart. He would fain have given up all thoughts of courts and courtiers, but the habit was too strong on him to let him rest at ease. He had deceived himself if he thought he had learned thoroughly the emptiness of what they had to offer him. Here and there, the restlessness breaks out. Writing to Atterbury, just appointed Bishop of Rochester and Dean of Westminster, he feels that to that fiery spirit he can speak out his mind, and he assures him

"Hæ latebræ *nec* dulces *nec*, si mihi credis, amoenæ."

Laracor was not the quiet and peaceful retreat that it had seemed to him, when jaded by the frets of politics: and Dublin was worse still. There "they were all party mad." "It is one felicity," Swift goes on, "of being among willows that one

is not troubled with faction." In Dublin his friends were few, and of the old ones some had drifted away. We shall see, further on, something of the circle that he formed when his banishment was final: but now some three or four comprise all his friends. Sir Constantine Phipps, the Lord Chancellor, now under the cloud of a threatened attack by the House of Commons for his supposed leanings to Jacobitism: Judge Nutley, pressed on his acquaintance by Prior, who, nevertheless, doubts whether Nutley's gravity would not lose him Swift's esteem: Worrall, who was living within the liberty of St. Patrick's, and whose friendship dated from nearly twenty-five years back: and Archdeacon Walls, the Dean's business factotum—these well-nigh completed the list. Walls soon asked Swift to stand godfather to a little daughter: and in spite of his doubts as to the opportuneness of the new arrival, Swift, on the 7th of August, gives assent:

"I received your notification relating to one Dorothy (Mrs. Walls) and her new productions, which like other second parts are seldom so good as the first. I shall be in town, I hope, by the time appointed, and contribute as far towards making your new inhabitant a Christian as one of that sex can be." *

There is more in the same mood, proving that the dulness was not perpetual: and some domestic mishap, bewailed by Walls, serves to stir Swift to a joke. "Your melancholy story of the cask is not new to me. I have known it very frequent to have empty wooden vessels stufft with books."

But, with the scent of battle in the air, he is not displeased when the summons to return becomes too peremptory to be disregarded. He is glad to get away from Ireland, although when once he feels himself again in England, the sense of hopelessness returns. On the 31st of August he sets out: and on the 17th of September he thus writes from London to Walls, when on the eve of renewing the life of "sturt and

* *Swift to Walls* (Mr. Murray's MSS.)

strife," behind which those private cares, that are at once the perplexity and the interest of Swift's biography, are so often forced to disappear.

"Our St. Mary's friends, I suppose, have told you I got well here. It is an empty town, and I believe I shall go to Windsor for some time. I protest I am less fond of England than ever. The ladies tell me they are going to ive at Trim, I hope they will pass their Christmas at Dublin. Our club is strangely broke; the Bishop at Dromore, I here, and none but you and Stoytes left. Our goody Walls, my gossip, will die of the spleen. Pray write to me when you have leisure. I care not five-pence for your Dublin news, but of our friends, and of my own affairs: and give my service to Mr. Commissioner Forbes. You will have the Duke of Shrewsbury* soon over with you; and Sir John Stanley† his Secretary; I have not yet seen the Duke nor the Duchess; for they are at Windsor with the court. My service to the alderman and goody and Catharine, and Mr. Manly and lady: I think I know no others. Enclose your letters to me under a cover, which cover you must direct to Erasmus Lewis, Esq., at Mr. Secretary Bromley's office at Whitehall. My service to Parnell. I have lazily deferred this letter till the post is going. Pray God bless my little goddaughter. I hope to breed her up to be good for something, if her mother will let me."

In a letter to Walls from Windsor, only a fortnight later, he speaks of a proposal to make him Prolocutor of Convocation, in which he is not unwilling to acquiesce.‡

"I will confess to you, there are two reasons why I should comply with it; one is, that I am heartily weary of Courts and Ministers, and politics, for several reasons impossible to tell you: and I have a mind to be at home, since the Queen has been pleased that Ireland should be my home. The other reason is, that I think somebody educated in Ireland should be pro-

* The Duke was appointed Lord Lieutenant.

† Sir John Stanley was the uncle of Miss Mary Granville, afterwards Mrs. Pendarves, and finally Mrs. Delany. It was to his house that she and her sister were carried on the night so graphically described by her, when her father was arrested in 1714: and by Sir John she was in great measure brought up. Swift, in two of his later Irish papers, recalls a saying of Stanley's, the truth of which seems to have struck him much: that in the matter of laying on taxes, the House of Commons was generally misled by an erroneous supposition that two and two make four, whereas they only make one. A tax when doubled, he means to say, often yields only one half of that which it brought in before it was increased. See Scott's edition of the works, Vol. VII., pp. 170, 258.

‡ *Swift to Archdeacon Walls*, Oct. 1, 1713. (Mr. Murray's MSS.)

locutor; and I hear there are designs of turning it another way. But, if you find it will not do, I hope you will quit the design in proper season."

He had hoped that, at last, what he felt to be the ingratitude of the Irish Church, for the work he had done, might be wiped away, and that without the countenance of the Episcopal bench he might be chosen as representing the Lower Clergy. But he writes again and again to Walls, urging him not to press the matter unduly. For his own part, he does not wish the post, save as "an honest excuse to leave courts and public thoughts." He "will not hawk for an appointment he nowise seeks to desire, and then fail of it."* He thought he was secure of Archbishop King's help: but once again he finds the Archbishop a fickle friend, and Lord Chancellor Phipps tells him what difficulties he may have to encounter there.†

"I cannot discharge the part of a friend, if I omit to let you know that your great neighbour at St. Pulcher's is very angry with you. He accuses you for going away without taking your leave of him, and intends in a little time to compel you to reside at your deanery. He lays some other things to your charge, which you shall know in a little time."

Such threats as these were little likely to reconcile Swift to his Irish post. His anger became stronger when Walls wrote to him that he must come over, and work for his election to the Prolocutorship. Swift replies thus:‡—

"I have had two letters from you very lately. The last, of the 19th instant, came yesterday. As for those you sent me about the Prolocutorship, I reckon them for nothing. I would see you all whipt before I would venture myself in any manner to come over upon a fool's errand: and for what? for a place I would rather be without, neither would I take it upon any score but being chosen freely by a vast majority, which would let the world see they thought me a man fit to serve the church. And since they have not chosen me, they shew they do not think me such a man, and consequently they and I do not deserve each other."

Swift had, indeed, found enough to busy him without troubling

* *Swift to Walls*, October 20th.
† *Phipps to Swift*, October 24th.
‡ *Swift to Walls*, November 26th, 1713 (Mr. Murray's MSS.)

himself over Irish prolocutorships. He had reached England on the eve of the election of a new Parliament. The constituencies were about to pronounce their opinion on the Peace and on the Commercial Treaty. The Whigs professed themselves to be striving for the honour of England, for the safety of the Protestant succession, for the well-being of English manufactures. The Tories put in the front of their appeal the boon of Peace which they had secured, the benefit of cheaper commodities which their Commercial Treaty offered, and the loyalty to Church and Crown, which they defended, but which new-fangled notions were undermining. All seemed to point to the success of the Whigs. The victories, to which Marlborough had accustomed the people, were missed. The merchants had been roused to ardent political partizanship, by the only efficacious instrument, that of self-interest. The fears of Pope and Pretender were vividly presented to the mob. The disastrous betrayal of our interests to France was heightened by all the exaggeration that partizanship could stimulate. The Whig supporters wore locks of wool in their hats to shew the British industry that was threatened by the unheard of laxity of Bolingbroke's commercial scheme. They burned in company the effigies of Pope, Devil, and Pretender. On the other hand the Tories could only appeal to the unobtrusive benefits of peace and the abstractions of passive obedience. To typify their creed they wore branches of the oak leaves, that had sheltered the fugitive king. Steele was urging in the *Guardian* the double dealing of the French in the matter of the Dunkirk fortifications: and he was feebly answered by feeble hands in the *Examiner*.* A "*Short History of the Last Parliament*" from the pen of Walpole, far as it falls below the trenchant simplicity of Swift's style, was still strikingly effective. In a mock dedication to the Lord ——, by

* After Swift quitted the *Examiner*, it was kept up for a time by Mrs. Manley, and others whom she could get to assist her.

whom he means to indicate Lord Oxford, he gives him lavish ironical praise as a true, thorough, and successful friend to France, whose labours had undone the ill-work of Marlborough in curbing the ambition of the French king. He shews in the clearest light the ludicrous inconsistency of that Parliament, by turns favouring the war, and then, in answer to the call of the ministry, succumbing to the Peace proposals. What motives were at work? What motives could have acted, but bribery and selfish greed? The allotment of places, the disbursement of secret service money, the shameless bribery, are all touched on by the masterly hand of one who was already qualifying for the place of adept in Parliamentary corruption. If the majority were ever by chance independent, even the fact that they were so, is turned to their disgrace: it is but a sign of the flimsiness of their conviction, which allowed them these freaks of momentary liberty.

Swift had not come at all too soon. A month before Lord Oxford had been apparently in the full tide of success. Then it seemed as if the only object of any one who would learn politics was to unravel the enigma of his mind. Men had not yet discovered that the seeming mystery covered little but incapacity. But already the seeds of failure were laid. The extreme Tories suspected and hated Harley's moderation. Bolingbroke was growing bolder in his pronounced enmity. Ill health was pressing on the Lord Treasurer, and confirming him in that vice of drunkenness which was hereditary in his family. Before the close of November, Swift, whose fidelity to him never varied, had to console him as well as might be under crushing bereavement—the death of his eldest and favourite daughter, the Marchioness of Caermarthen.* "I could hardly think of anything," says Swift to Walls, "having just lost a friend I extremely loved, the poor Marchioness of Caermarthen. She was but 24 years old, a most excellent person, adorned with all possible good qualities. She was

* *Swift to Walls*, 26 Nov. 1713. (Mr. Murray's MSS.)

Lord Treasurer's eldest daughter and his favourite. He is in great affliction: and so are five hundred others."

The seeds of decay were there, and Swift was fully alive to its dangers. It could be no matter for surprise to him that, after the blows he had aimed at the Whigs, he should now be singled out for attack. He was pointed out by those who followed Steele's insinuations, as the writer of the *Examiner:* and this, false as it was, became the text for Abel Boyer's *Political State*, for November, 1713. Swift's relations with Harley, the reward of the Deanery, his supposed infidelity, the Jacobitical leanings ascribed to him, were all made the subject of Boyer's laboured invective; and the libel was pointed by the full quotation of Swift's own burlesque imitation of the seventh of Horace's First Book of Epistles, in which he had just described his own introduction to the Lord Treasurer, and their subsequent dealings, with a freedom and a want of reticence, that almost served as baits to the lampooner. He gave his enemies the very handle they wanted, when he spoke of himself thus:—

> "A clergyman of special note
> In shunning those of his own coat:
> Which made his brethren of the gown
> Take care betimes to run him down:
> No libertine, *nor over nice*,
> Addicted to no sort of vice:
> Went where he pleased, said what he thought,
> Not rich, but owed no man a groat:
> In State opinions *à la mode*,
> He hated Wharton like a toad:
> Had given the faction many a wound,
> And libelled all the Junta round."

One cloud that threatened his friends was the illness of the Queen. "We are here," says Swift,* "in odd circumstances. Few of the Whigs will allow the Queen to be alive, or, at best, that she can live a month." The illness passed, but it

* *Swift to Walls*, 2nd Feb., $17\frac{14}{15}$. (Mr. Murray's MSS.)

left an impression of danger on the Ministry. The close of that life would open questions of exceeding difficulty, which were scarcely likely to be settled by a Ministry in which the essential weakness of division had appeared. The elections, no doubt, contrary to all expectation, had gone adversely to the Whigs, and the Ministers found themselves with a large majority. But even with this the meeting of Parliament was deferred, as it would seem, from the timidity or hesitation of the Ministers.

The chief topic of discussion for the opposition while awaiting the opening of Parliament was the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht. Bad as this Treaty was, the Whigs averred that even its poor conditions were still unfulfilled. Dunkirk's fortifications were still intact: and it was feared that the Ministers were inclined to relax the requirement for their destruction out of deference to the desires of France. Steele, now in the full flush of his honours as the new Member of Parliament for Stockbridge, had been bestirring himself in the discussion, and partly from political ambition, partly in hope of a little gain, he had written a pamphlet on the *Importance of Dunkirk*. It had been answered by Swift, who now found the opportunity of revenge for which he longed, in a pamphlet with the title of *The Importance of the Guardian*, written in his most scathing style of sarcasm. This appeared in December, 1713. Steele followed up his first effort by producing, on the 19th of January, *The Crisis*, which was intended to arouse the nation to the dangers now threatening the principles of the Revolution. It was ponderous, ill-conceived, and unreadable: reproducing at full length the tedious detail of the Acts of Settlement. But such as it was, the Whigs caught it up eagerly: and Steele's vanity prompted him to a new effort in the *Englishman*, where he went further afield, and interfered even with Irish politics. He was answered in a style of the fiercest scorn by Swift: and this answer—*The Public Spirit of the Whigs*—which appeared in March, remains as the solitary

monument, that towers high above all the passing incidents of the fray.

Meanwhile, on the 16th of February, Parliament had at length met. The Queen's health was felt to be hazardous: the stocks were falling: the Ministry knew their position to be threatened. Country gentlemen, beyond the limits of the Whig party, began to have suspicions of Jacobite designs. Ireland was intractable, and seemed indisposed to accept ministerial guidance. Disunion was now so serious, that Oxford and Bolingbroke hardly kept up a semblance of civility to one another. Extreme Tories dreaded lest the moderate men, whom they called the "Whimsicals," would coalesce with the Whigs: moderate men feared lest the extreme Tories should make terms with the Pretender. When Parliament opened, its first act involved something of a slight on the Ministry. Sir Thomas Hanmer, a Tory, but a Tory who was now separated from the Ministry, was elected as Speaker instead of William Bromley, one of the members for Oxford University: and his election was viewed as a sort of triumph for the Whigs. Steele, with his usual and characteristic tactlessness, kindled into fury the ill-will that was already slumbering against him for the *Crisis*. He not only rose to make his maiden speech on the first day of the Session, and on a subject usually treated in accordance with the strictest notions of Parliamentary etiquette: but with a reminiscence of a Latin idiom, unknown to nine-tenths of his hearers,* he described himself as "rising to do honour to Sir Thomas Hanmer."

The first weeks of the Session were spent mainly in attacks by the Commons on Steele, and by the Lords on Swift. Swift, in his pamphlet, by some contemptuous language, possibly by an over-candid utterance of some home-truths, had mortally offended the Scottish representatives. He decried the Union as an unmitigated evil for England, rendered necessary only by the ill-management of Lord Godolphin. At

* *Assurgere alicui.*

most it saved only a year or two of campaigning, which would have been all that the reduction of the Scots could have required. Proud, poor, turbulent, and shifty, the Scottish representatives were only too ready to find some means of making themselves troublesome. With the Duke of Argyll at their head, they now went in a body to petition the Crown for redress. The Lord Treasurer, unwilling to alienate the Northern Lords, had recourse to the sure refuge of vacillation and weakness—evasion and untruth. He issued a Proclamation offering £300 reward for information as to the author, of whom he declared that he knew nothing: and at the same time, when Morphew and Barber, the publisher and printer, were summoned to account for their share in the production, he secretly sent £100 to Swift to re-imburse these under-strappers for their loss and trouble. The thought was not an unkindly one: but the imposture is all the more strange, as he can scarcely have hoped to persuade anyone that he was not actually privy to the Tract.

The fury of the Scotch champions passed lightly over the head of Swift. But it was otherwise with his opponent Steele. His arrogance, his folly, the cool effrontery of his maiden speech, angered even his own party, and rendered their defence lukewarm. The House of Commons had more effectual means of sating their vengeance than was possessed by a clique of impoverished Scotch nobles. The *Crisis* was condemned: and, by a curious freak of parliamentary virulence, the member for Stockbridge was stripped of his blushing honours, and expelled from Parliament.*

Swift was not likely to slacken his effort, because of attacks and suspicions from without. But dissension within sickened and disheartened him. Freely as his labours had been given,

* It may be convenient in this connexion to deal with what seems to be an incident of the Swift and Steele quarrel, viz., the *Character of Steele*, which was afterwards republished as the work of Wagstaffe. See *Note* at the end of this chapter for a discussion of this point.

he now only longed for an end of them. "I am now," he writes to Walls,* "under a great load of uneasy business which I hope to get over." Amid the struggle, his most congenial interest lay in the planning of new literary schemes, and in drawing more close the ties that bound him to Arbuthnot and Pope and Gay. These years of hot political strife, much as they had absorbed Swift in the exciting whirl of affairs, had been blanks as regards all permanent literary work. Now, as the struggle was growing hopeless, and as its end appeared to be near, the schemes in which he was linked with these more sympathetic comrades, regained their place. The chief was the plan conceived by the Scriblerus Club, devoted to prolong "the memory of that learned phantom which is to be immortal,"† Martinus Scriblerus. Swift, Gay, Pope, and Arbuthnot formed the Club: Parnell soon joined them: and Oxford and Bolingbroke shared in their designs. They met at the rooms in St. James's Palace which Arbuthnot held as Court Physician: and their evenings there were given to planning a treatise which was to hold up to ridicule the absurdities of pedantic learning in all its forms. Arbuthnot was the centre of the group, and the name of Martin himself was sometimes applied to, and accepted by, him. He became the moving power, and the first fragments which actually appeared owed much to his hand. The memoirs of the half-crazed pedant, after the Don Quixote type, who was to be the hero of the whole, were begun by him. But the other friends, too, were full of the plan. Pope was "returning from Troy."‡ Gay was idly looking about for employment: and Swift was ready to beguile by literature his political disgust. Bolingbroke was proud to air his versatility: and Lord Oxford's stolid phlegm let him find amusement in the jingling couplets which were the

* *Swift to Walls*, 6th March, 17$\frac{1}{13}$. (Mr. Murray's MSS.)

† The phrase occurs in a letter from Pope to Arbuthnot, 2nd Sept., 1714.

‡ "The season of the Campaign before Troy, is near over," so Pope himself says in a letter written at this time to Arbuthnot.

tinsel part of the design, and in which he was pleased to shew his own facility.* Swift mistook the stolidity for fortitude, and was glad to invite his chief to throw off cares which he fancied might be pressing him too hard.

But the storm was at hand. Disaster soon broke up the coterie and shattered their designs. A few fragments indeed appeared, from the pens of Arbuthnot and Pope and Gay, with perhaps some help from Swift. But the Scriblerus Club is chiefly of interest in the life of Swift, not as it made him contribute to the joint production, but as it gives a new turn to his thoughts at so critical a moment. The literary monuments of Scriblerus are not to be found in anything that proceeded directly from this ineffective partnership of wit, but in the isolated efforts of the two greatest of the group—in Gulliver's Travels and the Dunciad.

The dangers were rapidly taking definite shape. Swift more than any other might, it had been hoped, appease the fatal disputes: but even he had failed. His patience was worn out; and in May he announced his intention of retiring and leaving the Ministry to their fate. He was still pressed to stay: for, as one of those who looked for his help † alleged in excuse of his importunity, "You have an unlucky quality that exposes you to the folly of those who love you: I mean *good nature*." The wrongs Swift has suffered, this correspondent admits: but "choose," he says, "to stay and convince the world that you are as much above private resentment when the public is concerned, as you are incapable of being tired out in the service of your country: and that you are neither afraid nor unwilling to face a storm in a good cause."

But at the end of May, Swift left. He buried himself at Letcombe in Berkshire, in the house of his friend Mr. Gery,

* "He used," Pope said to Spence, "to send trifling verses from the Court to the Scriblerus Club almost every day, and come and talk idly every night, when his all was at stake."

† Chiverton Charlton, Yeoman of the Guard, writing to Swift on the 22nd of May.

the vicar, whose unassuming worth had attracted Swift, even though he had been guilty of what Swift held to be the signal folly of marriage, and had been unwise enough to ask Swift's advice about that marriage only when it was too late to break it off.* One Molly Gery, Swift had known as far back as his Farnham days, and it was probably this old friendship for the family that now decided the choice of his place of retirement.

No contrast with the life he had just quitted, could have been greater than this. He sought it only in despair. He had striven long and faithfully, but now he could do no more. He refused to witness longer the blindness, the vacillation, the wretched jealousies, that were ruining the cause he had at heart. His absence was soon felt. Others attempted to take up his work: but they could not fill his place. "You have formed a new character," says the Lord Treasurer's own cousin, "which no one is vain enough to pretend to imitate." †

Swift stayed at Letcombe for just two months and a half, before he left for Ireland. These were eventful weeks for the country; and they formed a curiously critical passage in Swift's life. To understand much that is strange in his later years, we must attend carefully to his mood now: and every scrap of evidence that throws light upon that mood, is of interest.

On the 11th of June, he writes thus to Walls ‡ :—

"I think it is long since I wrote to you, or you to me. I am now retired into the country, weary to death of Courts and Ministers and business and politics. I hope to be in Ireland, if possible, by the end of the summer; sooner I cannot, having many papers to look over and settle while I am here. I was six weeks compassing the great work of leaving London, and did it at last abruptly enough: but go I would: the reasons I may live to tell you, or perhaps you will guess them by their effects before I see you. I shall say no more, but that I care not to live in storms, when I can no longer do service in the ship, and am able to get out of it. I have gone through my share of malice and danger, and will be as quiet the rest of my days as I can. So much for politics."

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* Journal for May, 1712.

† *Thomas Harley to Swift*, June 19, 1714.

‡ *Swift to Walls*, 11th June, 1714. (Mr. Murray's MSS.)

Then he breaks off, to deal with endless details about the business arrangements which he trusted to Walls. In a more amusing and more confidential strain, he writes to Arbuthnot:*

"My stomach is prouder than you imagine, and I scorned to write till I was writ to. I have already half lost the idea of Courts and Ministers. I dine between 12 and 1, and the whole house is a-bed by 10, and up at 6. I drink no wine and see but one dish of meat. I pay a guinea a week for dieting and lodging myself and man with an honest clergyman of my old acquaintance, and my paying is forced, for he has long invited me. I did not know till last night that the Princess Sophia was dead † when my landlord and I chanced to pay a visit to a farmer in a neighbouring village, and was told so over a mug of ale, by a brisk young fellow, just come from London, who talked big and looked on us with great contempt. * * * The fashion of this world passeth away: however I am angry at those who disperse us sooner than these may need. I have a mind to be very angry, and to let my anger break out in some manner that will not please them at the end of a pen.‡ * * * You are a set of people drawn almost to the dregs: you must try another game: this is at an end. Your Ministry is fourscore and ten years old, and all you can endeavour at is an Euthanasia, or rather it is in a deep consumption at five-and-twenty. * * * Writing to you much would make me stark mad. Judge his condition who has nothing to keep him from being miserable but endeavouring to forget those for whom he has the greatest value, love, and friendship. But you are a Philosopher and a Physician, and can overcome by your wisdom and your faculty those weaknesses which other men are forced to reduce by not thinking on them. Adieu, and love me half so well as I do you."

Swift was perhaps helped to the oblivion he desired by planning for Scriblerus. Pope tells him that Arbuthnot was ascribing his retirement entirely to zeal for the scheme: that his "only design is to attend at full leisure to the life and adventures of Scriblerus." And Arbuthnot himself,§ after hinting at some of the growing troubles, and telling how "the

* *Swift to Arbuthnot*, 16th June, 1714. Printed by Mr. Cunningham, in his edition of Lives of the Poets (1854), Vol. III., p. 203.

† The Electress died on the 28th of May.

‡ This refers to the *Free Thoughts on the Present State of Affairs*, which was written just now, but by Bolingbroke's intervention was delayed so long, that it was allowed to stand over till later years.

§ *Arbuthnot to Swift*, June 26, 1714.

Dragon * dies hard," turns also to Scriblerus. "Pray remember Martin," he says, "who is an innocent fellow, and will not disturb your solitude. The ridicule of medicine is so copious a subject, that I must only here and there touch it." Then he gives a sketch of his own and Pope's plans for fulfilling the common design, adding, "I do not give you these hints to divert you, but that you may have your thoughts and work upon them." Swift replied in the following letter, now first printed, which paints for us, with strange clearness of outline, both Swift's relations to his literary fellow-workers, and his outlook on political affairs † :—

July 3rd, 1714.

I reckoned you would have held up for one letter, and so have given over. That is the usual way I treat my best absent friends when I am in London. Did I describe myself as in a happy state here? Upon my faith you read wrong: I have no happiness but being so far out of the way of the Dragon and the rest. Lewis reproaches me as one who has still an itch to the Court only because I asked him how the *Summa rerum* went: was not that unjust? and quotes upon me *Quae lucis miseris tam dira cupido?* I do assert that living near a Court with some circumstances is a most happy life, and would be so still if the Dragon did not spoil it. I find the triumvirate of honest councillors is at an end. I am gone; Lewis says he lives in ignorance in his castle, and you meddle as little as you can: one thing still lies upon you, which is to be a constant adviser to Lady M(asham). The game will of course be played into her hand. She has very good sense but may be imposed upon. And I heard a whisper that the Squire ‡ plies there again. 'Tis, as you say, if the Dragon speaks kindly of Parnell he is gone. 'Tis the Ossories that get the Derryes and the Chesters the Yorks.§

To talk of Martin in any hands but yours is a folly. You every day give better hints than all of us together could do in a twelvemonth: and, to say the truth, Pope, who first thought of the hint, has no genius at all to it in my mind. Gay is too young; Parnell has some ideas of it, but is idle: I could put together and lard and strike out well enough, but all that relates to the sciences must be from you. I am a vexed unsettled vagabond, and my thoughts are turned towards some papers I have, and some other things I

* The Dragon was the familiar name for Oxford.

† *Swift to Arbuthnot.* (MS. letter in the Forster collection.)

‡ The familiar name for Bolingbroke.

§ Dr. Hartstong, Bishop of Ossory, had just been translated to Derry: and Sir William Dawes from Chester to York.

would fain get from you and Lady M(asham), and would have had from the Dragon but that is impossible till he is out, and then I will go to him to Herefordshire and make him give me hints. I have got my History* from Secretary Bromley; and they shall never have it again, and it shall be an altered thing if I live.

The hints you mention relating to medicine are admirable. I wonder how you can have a mind so *dégagé* in a Court where there are so many million of things to vex you. You must understand I have writt this post to the Dragon, but you must not take notice of it nor I fancy will he, for what I writt is very odd and serious. I think to go and ramble for a month about Herefordshire and those parts. Ask the Dragon whether he will order his people at his castle to receive me. Why do you not send your Parliament agrazing? What do you mean by your Proclamation and £5000?† Till I hear reasons I dislike your Politics. Why do I talk of it say you? Why did that puppy Barber write of it to me? But the Commons offer £100,000. If I was the Pretender I would come over myself and take the money to help to pay my troops. They had better put out a Proclamation that whoever discovers the Pretender or the longitude shall have £100,000.‡ This strain is a sacrifice to Hanover, the Whigs, and the Qu(een)'s state of health. It will neither satisfy Hanover, silence the Whigs, nor cure the gout. Give him a pension and oblige him to live beyond the Alps. What's become of your project to make it high treason to bring over foreign troops? I wish a little care was taken for securing the kingdom as well as the succession.§ But country Politics are doubly insupportable, and so I have done and retire to lament with my neighbours the want of rain and dearness of hay. Farmer Tyler says the white mead at Chawdry has not been so bad in the memory of man, and the summer barley is quite dried up, but we hope to have a pretty good crop of wheat. Parson, 'tis thought, must stick to his bargain, but all the neighbours say the Attorney was an arrant rogue. We cannot get a bit of good butter for love or money. I could tell you more of the state of our affairs, but doubt your taste is not refined enough for it.

The irony which appears in the closing lines here has marks peculiar to his later humour, and the picture which he gives of his life throughout these letters, bears out that which Pope

* The History of the Peace of Utrecht. It never appeared.

† The proclamation offering a reward of £5000 for the Pretender, dead or alive, was issued, after the death of the Electress, to appease the alarms of a Jacobite invasion.

‡ If anything were needed to prove the absolute ignorance on Swift's part of any Jacobite designs, this sentence would supply it.

§ This was the extent of Swift's Jacobitism: that is to say, he was strongly in favour of the Revolution Settlement, but refused to accept it as the be-all and end-all of politics.

gives to Arbuthnot in the form of a mock news letter, on the 4th of July.*

"This day the envoys deputed to Dean Swift on the part of his late confederates, arrived here during the time of divine service. They were received at the back door, and having paid the usual compliments on their part, and received the usual chidings on that of the Dean, were introduced to his landlady, and entertained with a pint of the Lord Bolingbroke's Florence. The health of that great Minister was drank in this pint, together with the lord Treasurer's, whose wine we also wished for; after which were commemorated Dr. Arbuthnot, and Mr. Lewis, in a sort of cider, plentiful in these parts, and not altogether unknown in the taverns of London. There was likewise a sideboard of coffee, which the Dean roasted with his own hands in an engine for the purpose, his landlady attending all the while that office was performing. He talked of politics over coffee, with the air and style of an old statesman, who had known something formerly, but was shamefully ignorant of the last three weeks. When we mentioned the welfare of England, he laughed at us, and said Muscovy would become a flourishing empire very shortly. He seems to have wrong notions of the British Court, but gave us a hint as if he had a correspondence with the King of Sweden. As for the methods of passing his time, I must tell you one which constantly employs an hour about noon. He has in his windows an orbicular glass, which by contraction of the solar beams into a proper focus, doth burn, singe, or speckle, white, or printed paper, in curious little holes, or various figures. We chanced to find some experiments of this nature upon the votes of the House of Commons. The name of Thomas Hanmer, Speaker, was much singed, and that of John Barber entirely burnt out. There was a large gap at the edge of the bill of schism, and several specks upon the Proclamation for the Pretender. I doubt not but these marks of his are mystical, and that the figures he makes this way are a significant cypher to those who have the skill to explain them."

Swift's own letters as well as the laboured artificiality of Pope's description lead us to the same conclusion as to his mood during these weeks. By his former associates he was kept fully informed as to the "chaos of affairs" which now prevailed. The rapidly approaching fall of Oxford, the tricks of Lady Masham, the growth of Bolingbroke's influence, were all chronicled for him. Swift, in his retirement, received them as from a world to which he no longer belonged. His

* Printed in Mr. Elwin's Edition of Pope. (*Letters*, II., 468.)

friends were still pressing, on his behalf, his appointment as historiographer, for which he had asked in a memorial drawn up three months before. But all direct interest in politics he had, as he fancied, laid aside for ever. He had before spoken with anger and vexation of the toil and worry that his political work had caused him: but he had never spoken of politics with the apathetic cynicism that he now assumed. Though he would not allow himself to disown them in failure, he was nevertheless disgusted with his friends: it may be, that he was in some sort disgusted with himself, and with his ill-spent labour. When his money affairs in Ireland go wrong, through the carelessness and dishonesty of Parvisol his agent, he seems to let loose an amount of pent-up indignation that covered perhaps more than Parvisol's wrong-doing.

"Such a rascal," * he says, "deserves nothing more than rigorous justice. He has imposed upon my easiness, and that is what I never will forgive. I beg you will not do the least thing in regard to him, but merely for my interest, as if I were a Jew, and let who will censure me. * * * His vanity, pride, and carelessness, are ruining me when I am laden with debts, and the Court will not give me a penny to pay them. I am above £150 in debt in London since I came. * * I am weary of Ministers: I stole from them all, and have here a little quiet. * * * Do as you please, but let no regard to him influence you. I will take all the blame of hardship on myself: lay it on me as strong as you please."

The indignation, the cynicism, and the apathy, were indeed the signs of a mind ill-at-ease with itself. He cannot shake off the longing to be back, even though the favourable circumstances, which, as he said to Arbuthnot, might make living near a Court a most happy life, were wholly gone. He would fain have seen his lot cast amongst the friends who were so much to him: but he saw that the hope of a settlement in England was vanishing. He had, for nearly four years, turned from the literary work in which he was unrivalled, and had narrowed himself to party: and now he dreaded lest his power was gone. "I could put together and lard and strike out," as he says to

* *Swift to Walls*, July 3, 1714. (Mr. Murray's MSS.)

Arbuthnot, "but I am a poor unsettled vagabond." To wean himself from the past; to strike out a new line; to allow his sarcasm to shake itself free from casual environments, and to recover its broader and more permanent tone,—this was now to be the work of Swift: and it began during these few weeks of apparent quiet, but of real struggle and self-discipline.

During Swift's absence the Schism Bill, which was to prevent Schoolmasters carrying on their functions unless they had taken the Sacrament according to the rites of the Established Church, was pushed rapidly forward. It was Bolingbroke's Bill: and his object was to show that a vigorous defiance had taken the place of the timid moderation of Oxford. The Bill was finally carried on the third reading in the Lords by eight votes: and it was to come into operation on the 1st of August. Swift did not love the Dissenters: but he might well doubt the expediency of a measure which was to be the sign of his patron's ruin.

On the 8th of June, Oxford addressed a memorial to the Queen, partly intended as a justification of his past action, partly as a means of winning back some of the favour that was fast deserting him. The paper is itself his chief indictment. It is pusillanimous, cringing, and without real perception of a minister's duty. He declines responsibility for failure, because he had been over-ruled. He assumes credit for having concealed defalcations for which his colleagues were to blame. He admits, with almost inconceivable want of pride, that he had despatched Bolingbroke on a mission to France, not for the public good, but that he might gain Bolingbroke's good will. Swift could have known nothing of the letter: but much as he held himself bound to fidelity, and much as he deceived himself as to the real capacity of Oxford, is it possible that Swift can have silenced all doubts as to the man, who was weak enough to write a letter such as this? Opposed by Mrs. Masham, and disliked by the Queen, Oxford still clung to office. Bolingbroke saw that he must strike at once, and in the

last week of July, the Chancellor was summoned to town to carry out the changes. Oxford lost his self-control, and took to womanish scolding and fretful threats. Erasmus Lewis, his faithful guide and adherent, told Swift that in all his vexations, he was chiefly vexed by this pusillanimity on the part of his chief.*

On the 27th of July the end came. The Lord Treasurer and Bolingbroke had a conference with the Queen, which ended in a scene of angry wrangling. Between eight and nine o'clock in the evening, Oxford was summoned to resign the White Staff. Bolingbroke had triumphed: but the scene of the morning left the poor Queen stunned and done to death. Amidst the hungry claimants, it could not be settled who should have the staff. It was generally agreed that it should be put in commission: but the commissioners were not named. Content with his triumph, Bolingbroke might well pause. And meanwhile, at his house in Golden Square, he entertained Stanhope, Pulteney, Craggs, and Walpole, as if in ostentatious proof that to him the coalition was possible which Oxford had aimed at in vain.

Less than a month before, Swift had written to take, as he thought, leave of Oxford. The letter tells its own story.

July 1, 1714.

My Lord,

When I was with you, I have said more than once, that I would never allow quality or station made any real difference between men. Being now absent and forgotten, I have changed my mind: you have a thousand people who can pretend they love you, with as much appearance of sincerity as I; so that, according to common justice, I can have but a thousandth part in return of what I give. And this difference is wholly owing to your station. And the misfortune is still the greater, because I always loved you just so much the worse for your station; for, in your public capacity, you have often angered me to the heart, but, as a private man, never once. So that, if I only look toward myself, I could wish you a private man to-morrow; for I have nothing to ask; at least nothing that you will give, which is the same thing: and then you would see whether I

* *Lewis to Swift.* 24 July, 1714.

should not with much more willingness attend you in a retirement, whenever you please to give me leave, than ever I did at London or Windsor. From these sentiments, I will never write to you, if I can help it, otherwise than as to a private person, or allow myself to have been obliged to you in any capacity.

The memory of one great instance of your candour and justice, I will carry to my grave; that having been in a manner domestic with you for almost four years, it was never in the power of any public or concealed enemy, to make you think ill of me, though malice and envy were often employed to that end. If I live, posterity shall know that, and more; which, though you, and somebody that shall be nameless, seem to value less than I could wish, is all the return I can make you. Will you give me leave to say how I would desire to stand in your memory? As one, who was truly sensible of the honour you did him, though he was too proud to be vain upon it; as one, who was neither assuming, officious, nor teazing; who never wilfully misrepresented persons or facts to you, nor consulted his passions when he gave a character; and lastly, as one, whose indiscretions proceeded altogether from a weak head, and not an ill heart. I will add one thing more, which is the highest compliment I can make, that I never was afraid of offending you, nor am now in any pain for the manner I write to you in. I have said enough; and, like one at your levee, having made my bow, I shrink back into the crowd.

I am, etc.

JON. SWIFT.

It was thus that a striking chapter in Swift's life was closed. On the 25th of July, he wrote a letter to Arbuthnot* where politics were scarcely named, and where the prospect of the "Dragon" going was only lightly alluded to. He is chiefly occupied with expressing his friendship for Arbuthnot, and with encouraging him in his work on Scriblerus.

"Our talk was of the Dragon's being out, as a thing done: so no more reflection on that neither:—Qu'est ce que l'homme? And so you will lend me all your money. The mischief is I never borrow money of a friend. You are mightily mistaken: all your honour, generosity, good nature, good sense, wit, and every other praiseworthy quality, will never make me think one jot the better of you. That time is now some years past, and you will never mend in my opinion. But, really, Brother, you have a sort of shuffle in your gait: and now I have said the worst that your most mortal enemy

* *Swift to Arbuthnot:* printed by Cunningham. (Lives of the Poets, III., 204.)

would say of you with truth. * * * Go on for the sake of wit and humour, and cultivate that vein which no man alive possesses but yourself, and which lay like a mine in the earth, which the owner for a long time never knew of."

Swift was thus throwing politics aside in his retreat, when the news of Oxford's fall came to him as an accomplished fact, from neutrals, from enemies, and from Oxford himself. Clearly the fall was complete and final. Swift must himself have seen, as Lewis said to him in a letter, that Oxford's parts were decayed: Swift had every excuse, and every motive, for standing aloof from him in his fall. He had striven long and his own reward had been poor. He was cultivated by Bolingbroke. He had already planned to go to Ireland: as he told Walls* "his trunk, with all his clothes and linen, was sent last week to Chester, and he was in rags." But he did not hesitate one moment in choosing his part, which was to cling to a friendship which had brought him so little, now that it could bring him even less. Oxford asked him to stay with him in Herefordshire, and Swift feels "he could not possibly refuse" the request.† But he knew what it meant. "I shall lose all favour with those now in power by following Lord Oxford in his retreat. I am hitherto very fair with them: but that will be at an end."

But it was not long before the scene shifted again. Bolingbroke's triumph was short-lived. The stormy disputes around her had shaken the poor Queen's health. Vexed, anxious, not knowing whom to trust, she listened, like one dazed, to the altercations raging round her. She told her attendants that "she could not outlive it." On Thursday the 29th of July, fatal symptoms appeared. Shooting pains in her head were not relieved by cupping. She lay in a comatose state: and a message was sent in haste by the Duchess of Ormond, to summon the ministers, who were sitting at the Cockpit in Whitehall, to Kensington Palace. They sat there in continuous

* *Swift to Walls.* 29th July. (Mr. Murray's MSS.) † *Ibid.*

conclave, when the door of the Council Chamber opened and two peers whose position warranted their intrusion, entered the room. They were the Dukes of Somerset and Argyll. At first there was some commotion: but the Duke of Shrewsbury presently rose and thanked them for their presence: business proceeded; and Bolingbroke felt himself checkmated. The Duke of Shrewsbury was chosen to fill the post of Lord Treasurer: the dying Queen's bedside was approached, and with a last effort of the honesty of purpose that gave some brightness to a life otherwise dreary and even ignoble, she prayed him, as she handed to him the staff, to "hold it for the good of her people."

Promptitude and energy now took the place of confusion and delay. The Privy Councillors within reach, Whigs as well as Tories, were summoned to the Board. The hopes of the Jacobites were dashed. The guards were increased: the garrison at the Tower was reinforced: the train bands were called out: and the ships of war were set in order. A cordial understanding was established between the Treasury and the Bank of England. Bolingbroke, lately so supreme, found himself taken to task for neglect of the national safety, in leaving the seaports unprovided against attack. Communications were opened with the Elector: the Heralds were ordered to be in readiness; and the Hanoverian envoy was requested to attend with the Black Box that contained the appointment of a Council of Regency.

Such were the preparations pressed forward during Friday and Saturday. During these days the Queen lay all but unconscious: and on Sunday morning at seven o'clock, she ended the life of ceaseless vexation and anxiety that august position and great power had brought to a homely, narrow, dull, and uneducated woman. Her fifty years had little of brightness in them: and at an age when many have not passed their prime, she was a lonely, worn-out, wreck, with husband and children gone, and with no real friend on earth.

"Sleep," says Arbuthnot to Swift, "was never more welcome to a weary traveller, than death was to her."

The news reached Swift soon after noon the same day. Bolingbroke's messenger passed through Wantage with the tidings, and a friend sent thence a hurried line to Swift at Letcombe. From Bolingbroke, he received a letter on the 3rd of August, half boastful, half defiant, half desperate. "All is lost but his spirit:" "everything is quiet and will continue so:" "the Tories seem to resolve not to be crushed:" "the Whigs are a pack of Jacobites:"—the letter contains as many inconsistencies as lines. The writer had not settled whether the case was desperate: and if desperate, what was the most picturesque bow with which he could retire from the stage. Lewis, the wary and practised politician, saw that all was lost: "all old schemes, designs, projects and journeys," are broken by the snapping of the Queen's thread of life.

The country went with the new order of things. Oxford was hooted by the same crowd that had cheered him to the echo three years before: and Bolingbroke was greeted with but doubtful applause. On the 4th of August the Duke of Marlborough, who had returned from abroad, entered London, escorted by two hundred noblemen on horseback.

Swift saw more quickly and more clearly than his confederates, that the Whig triumph was complete. The rabble, whose support had amused him, was changed: "Trade and Wool," now took the place of the old cry for "Sacheverell and the Church." With something of the eye of an artist he saw how the favour of the mob could be excited on the side against his own. "If they will retain me on the other side as their counsellor," he says jestingly to Bolingbroke, "I will engage them a majority." But he never loses heart, or hesitates as he did before the blow had fallen. "I have seen a letter from Dean Swift," says Arbuthnot to Pope in September: "he keeps up his noble spirit, and though like a man knocked

down, you may behold him still with a stern countenance, and aiming a blow at his adversaries."

Arbuthnot, too, saw that the end was come. Like Swift, he drew from it a lesson of proud and cynical humour. "I have an opportunity," he suggests to Swift,* "calmly and philosophically to consider that treasure of vileness and baseness that I always believe to be in the heart of man." He watches the burst of daylight on the wreck: the women cast from intrigue to tears: the schemes that had busied them scattered: their hopes at an end. For himself he had gained little and had little to lose. Such as it is, he is ready to give it up: "I have not seen anything as yet to make me recant a certain inconvenient opinion I have, that one cannot pay too dear for peace of mind." For the rest, "Fuimus Tories:" the Argives of Whigs will triumph, and his only regret is that Scriblerus may get morose and dull.

NOTE ON THE WAGSTAFFE VOLUME (p. 280).

One of the most bitter attacks on Steele, was that made in a Pamphlet on the *Character of Richard St—le, Esq., by Toby, Abel's Kinsman.* It was republished, in 1726, in a volume purporting to contain the miscellaneous works of Dr. William Wagstaffe, who had been Physician at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and who had died at Bath, the year before, at the age of 40. The volume begins with an account of Wagstaffe and his family, which seems, in the main, to be founded on fact. But the question remains, by whom were the works, collected in the volume, written? The hypothesis of the late Mr. Dilke, in his republished *Papers of a Critic*, is that they are mainly from the hand of Swift, with a few written by another hand, and inserted in order to mislead. Wagstaffe seems to have been a good-humoured, somewhat careless, wit, whose pen may well have produced some stray pieces, although he never attained to any reputation, and, according to his professed biographer, never acknowledged his authorship. We have no authority for saying that he was a friend of Swift's:† but

* *Arbuthnot to Swift.* Aug. 12, 1714.

† The nearest tie I can find is Swift's friendship for Sir Charles Bernard, the Physician of St. Bartholomew's, whose daughter Wagstaffe married. In the Journal, Swift speaks first of going to see the library of "poor Charles Bernard," which was to be sold: and then of attending the sale, to little purpose.

Swift undoubtedly knew some who were Wagstaffe's friends: and the death of the little-known physician, and careless wit, may have given Swift the opportunity for which he wished. As Mr. Dilke points out, at the very time Swift and Pope were collecting their miscellanies: and here seemed a favourable opportunity for turning off upon the obscure Wagstaffe, works which they did not desire to own.

The proof of Mr. Dilke's hypothesis, which is almost irresistible, rests on several grounds. Even by the admission of the writer of the biography, Wagstaffe could not correspond to the author of the *Character of Steele*. Wagstaffe, it is stated, "when he wrote it, did not even know Steele by sight." Yet, in the first paragraph, the *Character* refers to Steele's "short face:" and almost every line shows it to have been the work of one who had a personal pique against Steele. The pieces in the volume all belong to the years when Swift was in London, and was defending the views they contain, between 1710 and 1714: Wagstaffe lived till 1725, and, with so facile a pen, produced nothing more! The collector asserts that Wagstaffe kept his anonymity strictly: yet within a year after Wagstaffe's death, this nameless editor is able to publish a volume, which ascribes a tolerably long list of works to him, with no hint of a doubt in any case.

But, further, the *Character of Steele*, at least, if nothing more in the volume, is filled with marks of Swift's style. Throughout the volume there are references, which seem to bespeak Swift's hand.* The author of Gulliveriana ascribes the *Character* to Swift: and in the Englishman, Steele refers, not obscurely, to Swift as its writer. The *Character* refers to those charges of Steele's ingratitude to the patrons who kept him in office, which Swift brings against him in his letter of 13th May, 1713. Even the relenting towards Steele which the biography expresses,† is not unlikely to have been dictated by some memory of former friendship, surviving in Swift, when their quarrel had been dead and buried for a dozen years.

Lastly, there is a curious point brought out by Mr. Dilke in regard to the letter from Dr. Andrew Tripe,‡ printed in the volume. That letter is

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* The indications are slight separately, but almost convincing, in union. Amongst others, see p. 220, where the danger of Tory disunion is sketched in a few sentences amazingly like Swift: also p. 224, where there is a quotation from Swift's favourite, Rochefoucauld: p. 208, where there is a reference to the feeble answers to the *Conduct of the Allies:* p. 95, where Burnet and Ridpath are conjoined, exactly as Swift would have conjoined them: and p. 209, where Ormond, Oxford, and Bolingbroke, are sketched with just the colouring Swift would have employed.

† The *Character*, the preface says, does want some apology, for its treatment of a gentleman of known parts and abilities.

‡ Its title runs: *A Letter from the facetious Dr. Andrew Tripe, at Bath, to his loving brother, the profound Greshamite, shewing, &c.*

occupied largely either with medical metaphors or details. It is entirely different from the letter from Dr. Andrew Tripe to Nestor Ironside, which was one of the Scriblerus Club productions, and is generally printed amongst Swift's works.* But when Pope is endeavouring to shift off from his own or his confederates' shoulders, the authorship of the latter, he writes thus: "We are assured by another that he (*i.e.* Pope) wrote a pamphlet called Dr. Andrew Tripe, which proved to be one Dr. Wagstaffe's."† Pope was here clearly endeavouring to turn his readers off the scent, by identifying the Scriblerian Dr. Andrew Tripe, with the medical treatise to the Greshamite, which may really have been written by Wagstaffe, and which had just been published in the so-called Wagstaffe volume, by his literary ally, Swift.

On the whole then we may take it that Wagstaffe, though he may have been an occasional scribbler, was neither the author of all the pieces in the volume, nor even (as Scott supposes) an "under spur-leather" to Swift: but that Swift was in the main responsible for the volume, and that the most important pieces in it are from his own hand.

Mr. Dilke mentions, in connexion with this disguise, the fact that Swift published his *Polite Conversations* under the name of Simon Wagstaff. But it is doubtful whether this is a confirmation of the former personation, and not rather the reverse. If a man called himself Simon Wagsta*ff* in 1738, it is rather against than in favour of the theory that he published his tracts under the name of Dr. William Wagsta*ffe* in 1726.

The surname was also used as a disguise by Oldisworth, in annotations which he published on the Tatler (nominally translated from the French), in 1711, under the name of *Walter Wagstaff, Esq.*

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* Scott's 2nd Edition, IV., 279.

† The Dunciad, quarto Edition of 1743. Testimonies of Authors, XXV.

CHAPTER XII.

SWIFT IN RETIREMENT.

1714 to 1720.

ÆTAT. 46—52.

Effect of the quiet time at Letcombe—Disgust with politics—Libels that pursued Swift's retirement—The spurious *Essays*—His position in Dublin and at Laracor—Troubles as Vicar and as Dean—The completed triumph of the Whigs—Swift to Oxford, on his fall—The fellowship of slavery—Parties in Ireland—Swift suspected of Jacobitism—The "English Garrison" in Ireland—Toleration Act—Swift's view of it—Union against a common danger—His occupations—Literary schemes—Reviving interests—Vanessa—The relations between her and Swift—*Cadenus and Vanessa*—Vanessa at Celbridge—The letter to Stella—Vanessa's death—Her will, and Letters—Stella—The nature of her bond to Swift—Restraints imposed on it—The Marriage—What it meant to each.

THESE quiet weeks at Letcombe, after the storm and turmoil of political struggle, were of critical importance in Swift's life. At the end of the four years of ceaseless excitement, in which gratified ambition had been chequered by doubt and impatience, and occasional disgust, he had to balance the results of his life so far. Looking back on the early years of dependence and self-distrust: on the early pride and ambition: on the mistaken literary efforts that had preceded the first product of his full exuberance of genius in the *Tale of a Tub*, his was a strange experience. Scarcely had he discovered the richest vein of his genius, before he had found the dangers it was likely to involve. His boldness of speech had been misconstrued. The humour with which he set forth the ludicrous inconsistencies in all vulgar conceptions of the supernatural, had puzzled the timid and conventional thought of his time.

To restrain that humour, he had turned to what he might suppose the safest of all spheres, that of religious, social, and political essay-writing. He sought to make himself, above all, simple, clear, and logical in his method. Theory and speculation he set aside as fanciful and absurd. But in spite of himself, his humour would break out. With almost wayward exaggeration, he had thrown all his energies into the political struggle: and now, when the crash came, he was left "a poor cast courtier," whose aims and ambitions seemed suddenly to have slipped from his grasp, and all that he had gained from the struggle was a contempt for the trickery of politics. Vexed with the imposture, he had carved out new literary schemes, and formed deep and lasting literary friendships. With this legacy from the past he had now to find new aims, and to achieve new influence.

Swift never sought to cover his retreat by any assumptions of philosophical indifference. To leave England was a grief to him: to leave his friends, still more so. "When I leave a country without probability of returning," he writes to Pope, "I think as seldom as I can of what I loved or esteemed in it, to avoid the desiderium which of all things makes life most uneasy." From a position of enormous influence he had now sunk into one which made it prudent for his friends to avoid him. Thus Addison conveys his fear, through Jervas, to Pope.* "He owns he was afraid," writes Jervas, "Dr. Swift might have carried you too far among the enemy during the heat of the animosity: but now all is safe, and you are escaped, even in his opinion."

Pope resented this expression of alarm: but others might not be so indifferent: and such suspicion no doubt aggravated Swift's lot. That was not made more bearable by the fact that he was pursued by the utmost bitterness of lampooners. One of their productions was *The Hue and Cry after Dean Swift*, borrowing its title from a tract written in the interest of the

* *Jervas to Pope*, Aug. 20, 1714.

late Ministry, called *The Hue and Cry after the Pretender*. Its ribaldry and insult were made all the more pointed by extracts from what professed to be his *Journal*. These extracts, not unlike in style to those in which he parodied the last scenes of Bishop Burnet's life, are curious chiefly for the strange accuracy with which they repeat some of the features of the letters to Esther Johnson and Rebecca Dingley, portraying some of those personal foibles which Swift loved to detect in himself as well as in others, and which he exposed with an almost morbid frankness. Save for the difficulty of believing that it could be so, one is tempted to think that some treacherous friend had obtained access to the letters, and used their contents to give point to the satire.

Another ingenious plan for mortifying Swift, was the production of a volume of "*Essays, Divine, Moral and Political, by the author of a Tale of a Tub.** Subscribed with his own line, "In State Opinions *à la mode*," the frontispiece represents Swift breaking off at the gate of St. Patrick's Deanery, from the divines, with whom he had been riding, as the phrase was, "tantivy to Rome." The essays were a parody of works by Swift, the authorship of which had at various times crept out. The Dedication to Prince Posterity, suggested of course by the introduction to the *Tale of a Tub*, gave a defence of Swift, which really amounted to an indictment against him; and it was largely composed of tags and sentences out of his own works. The Essays on Religion piece together more of the same kind of fragments, representing it as his intention to shew that Religion is worthless; Christianity is ridiculed

* Mr. Dilke may very probably be right in ascribing these to Steele. The plan is not unlike that which would suggest itself to Steele: the intimacy which he once enjoyed with Swift would account for the reflection which they often give of Swift's own thoughts with a startling fidelity. But still more strong is the indication of authorship given by the stress which is laid in the Essay on Friendship, on the circumstances of the breach with Steele: and by the frequent reference to what was Steele's peculiar hobby, the necessity of the dismantling of Dunkirk.

through phrases taken from the "*Argument against abolishing Christianity:*" and Priests are satirized by a similar juxtaposition of various scattered remarks. The Moral Essays ascribe to him not only a contempt for virtue and for the ties of friendship, but even scandalous immorality. Those on politics chiefly aim at proving Swift's flagrant inconsistency.

His actual surroundings, so far as we can picture them to ourselves, were embarrassing and cheerless enough. In his own words:—

> "My state of health none cares to learn,
> My life is here no soul's concern,
> And those with whom I now converse
> Without a tear will tend my hearse.
> Some formal visits, looks and words,
> What mere humanity affords,
> I meet perhaps from three or four,
> From whom I once expected more.
> * * * *
> My life is now a burden grown
> To others, ere it be my own."

He was in debt to his predecessor Sterne for a large rambling, useless house; the expenses of installation cost something more; and the thousand pounds, which he was to receive from the Queen's last Ministry, to meet these and other debts, were withheld upon their fall. His home was dismal: and already the best part of Dublin society was being driven from the liberty of St. Patrick's by the unhealthy dampness which may well have aggravated Swift's maladies in later years.

At Laracor he found things looking gloomy enough to suit with the prevailing melancholy of his mood. "The wall of my own apartment," he writes to Bolingbroke, "is fallen down, and I want mud to rebuild it, and straw to thatch it. Besides, a spiteful neighbour has seized on six feet of ground, carried off my trees, and spoiled my grove." He has plenty of occupation indeed, in visiting his parishes, and looking after his tithes and farms; but it is occupation of a sort that contrasts unpleasantly with the scenes in which he had lately borne a part.

Both as Vicar, and as Dean, he had petty troubles. At Laracor a dissenting chapel was set up, and fallen as Swift was, he wasted energy in resisting this insult on his church, as at once immoral and illegal. With St. Patrick's chapter he was involved in even more serious disputes, where he had the mortification of finding that Archbishop King supported his opponents. His authority was not, indeed, likely to be very gently administered: and when he applied to Bishop Atterbury for advice, even that fiery prelate counselled moderation.

In England, meanwhile, matters were moving fast against Swift's friends. A Parliament, mainly Whig, met in March, $17\frac{1}{1}\frac{5}{4}$. A committee of secrecy was appointed: and before its report was issued, Bolingbroke suddenly withdrew, and took service with the Pretender: Ormond waited for his impeachment, and then fled: and Oxford was thrown into the Tower.

All seemed lost: and it was now that Swift shewed his fidelity to his friends. To Oxford he wrote as follows:—

DUBLIN, *July* 19, 1715.

MY LORD,

It may look like an idle or officious thing in me, to give your Lordship any interruption under your present circumstances; yet I could never forgive myself, if, after being treated for several years with the greatest kindness and distinction, by a person of your Lordship's virtue, I should omit making you at this time the humblest offers of my poor service and attendance. It is the first time I ever solicited you in my own behalf; and if I am refused, it will be the first request you ever refused me. I do not think myself obliged to regulate my opinions by the proceedings of a House of Lords or Commons; and therefore, however they may acquit themselves in your Lordship's case, I shall take the liberty of thinking and calling your Lordship the ablest and faithfullest minister, and truest lover of your country, that this age has produced. * * * * * * * * * * I have seen your Lordship labouring under great difficulties, and exposed to great dangers, and overcoming both, by the providence of God, and your own wisdom and courage. Your life has been already attempted by private malice; it is now pursued by public resentment. Nothing else remained. * * * * * * * * God Almighty protect you, and continue to you that fortitude and magnanimity he has endowed you with! Farewell.

JON. SWIFT.

"No misfortunes," the Duchess of Ormond writes in answer

to his letter sent on the downfall of the Duke, "can lessen your friendship, which is so great as to blind you on the side of your friends' faults, and make you believe you see virtues in them, it were happy for them they enjoyed in any degree." So too, Lady Bolingbroke, who had even more serious ills to bear than her husband's loss of power and office, found comfort in Swift's fidelity: "Your letter," she says, "came in very good time to me, when I was full of vexation and trouble, which all vanishes, finding that you were so good to remember me under my afflictions, which have been not greater than you can think, but much greater than I can express." Knowing what were the troubles of her married life, there is a touch of pathos for us in what she adds, with a confidence which she could repose in Swift: "As to my temper, if it is possible, I am more insipid and dull than ever, except in some places, and there I am a little fury, especially if they dare mention my dear lord without respect, which sometimes happens."

Swift did not lower either his standard of fidelity to friends, or the sternness of his front to foes. Suspected, and even in danger as he must have known himself to be, he never swerved from the decisiveness of his opposition to the new order of things. He valued the Protestant succession and would have tampered with no schemes to upset it: but he was enraged to find what claimed to be a guarantee of liberty made the excuse for its curtailment.

Rightly or wrongly, Swift became thoroughly impressed with the idea that, in the name of Protestant liberty, true liberty was being destroyed. This determined his attitude when he again set his hand to active conflict; and the first note of what animated his life hereafter was struck in the fierce irony expressed in a letter to Atterbury of April, 1716.*

"I congratulate with England for joining with us here in the fellowship of slavery. It is not so terrible a thing as you imagine: we have long lived

* *Swift to Atterbury*, April 18, 1716.

under it: and whenever you are disposed to know how to behave yourself in your new condition, you need go no further than me for a director. But, because we are resolved to go beyond you, we have transmitted a bill to England, to be returned here, giving the Government and six of the Council power for three years to imprison whom they please for three months, without any trial or examination: and I expect to be among the first of those upon whom this law will be executed."

The bitterness of indignation that breathes through these words, represents Swift's fixed opinion on the new order of things. "The scene and the times," he tells Pope,* "have depressed me wonderfully." "As to your friends," Arbuthnot assures him, "though the world is changed to them, they are not changed to you." But no assurances would tempt him back to England, and in Ireland he stood, as yet, listlessly aloof. He interfered occasionally in appointments, in regard to which he fancied that his position gave him some right to have a voice: but it was an interference prompted only by the desire to serve his friends, and stimulated only by the determination not to bate one jot of his privileges. "They shall be deceived," he writes to Walls of those in power,† "as far as my power reaches, and shall not find me altogether so great a cully as they would willingly make me." But except for this, he stood as yet apart and apathetic.

Ireland had adopted with no long delay the new order of things. Sunderland was Lord-lieutenant, and in his absence, the Lords Justices were chosen from amongst the pronounced enemies of the late government. Instead of Archbishop Lindsay, a Tory and High Churchman who, in 1713, had obtained the primacy through Swift's aid, Archbishop King, who owed Swift a grudge for being passed over, was now chosen as one of these Lords Justices: and for a time the feeling between him and Swift was one of absolute estrangement. King led a section of the Church which so far accepted the new order of things. But another party amongst the clergy were fierce in their

* *Swift to Pope*, Aug. 30, 1716.

† *Swift to Walls*, May 5, 1715. (Mr. Murray's MSS.)

denunciations of all that was allied with the Whigs, and carried their Tory principles to the verge of Jacobitism. Small sparks were enough to kindle flame between these sections. A long discussion, which violently agitated the Church, had been opened by Dr. Browne, Bishop of Cork, in a sermon* preached against drinking in remembrance of the dead. The contention was nominally doctrinal, but was in reality directed against the Whig custom of drinking to the immortal memory of William III.: and those who had neither doctrinal scruples, nor Jacobite sympathies, yet took the side of the Bishop of Cork from mere antipathy to the Whigs. On the other side Dr. Synge, Bishop of Raphoe,† defended the custom: and opinion varied according to the political bias of each theologian. For the opposition, Swift's friend Delany, in "*A Long History of a Short Session of Parliament, in a Certain Kingdom*," shewed how the remissness of the Tories, and the eager zeal of the Whigs, had changed what was originally a Tory, into a Whig, parliament, bent on the destruction of the Church. He was followed by a crowd of pamphleteers on his own side: and those of the Whigs were as numerous as the Tories. In 1714‡ we have a doggrel poem, reflecting on the late government, as "*Perkin's Cabal or the Mock Ministry*," and holding up to ridicule the lewdness of Bolingbroke, the dull crassness of Bromley, the scoundrelism of Prior and Moore, the "true prelatic pride" of Atterbury, and Phipps, as

> "The very Jeffries of his age,
> Frantic and wild with party rage."

In 1715 we have "*The Last Will and Testament of the Pre-*

* *Of Drinking in Remembrance of the Dead: a discourse delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Cork, by Peter, Lord Bishop of Cork*, Nov. 4, 1713.

† "*Defence of Eating and Drinking in Remembrance of the Dead, by Edward, Lord Bishop of Raphoe.*" This was followed by a rejoinder from Dr. Browne: and the controversy became general. Swift's well-known answer, when asked to drink to Irish commerce, that "he never drank in memory of the dead," is of course explained by the controversy.

‡ Irish Academy Pamphlets, Vol. XXX.

tender,"* bequeathing to his supposed adherents the legacies most suitable for each. Atterbury is to have "a troop of dragoons to be mounted by Irish Papists:" Prior, "all the empty and full bottles found in my house:" and Swift, "the liberty of writing a second part of the Tale of a Tub, with as much blasphemy as he shall think proper."

Amidst this violence of controversy, the following letter to Archbishop King shews that Swift was exposed to a danger not hitherto suspected by his biographers.

"My Lord.

"I received yesterday a letter from Mr. Manley, giving an account of the seizing of a parcel of treasonable papers with one Jefferies directed to Dr. Swift. I acquainted my Lord-Lieutenant with it, who was very well pleased with this fresh instance of your grace's diligence and zeal in the King's service, which cannot fail of being highly acceptable to his Majesty. His excellency commanded me to give you his thanks for it, and he hopes that if there appear enough against the Doctor to justify it, he is kept in confinement, and Mr. Houghton also: but how far that may be justifiable your grace is best able to judge. I presume they are at least held to very good and sufficient bail. If anything can add to your grace's character this application to the public service will undoubtedly heighten it in the esteem of all good men, which like all other things that may happen to your advantage will give a particular satisfaction to, my Lord, your grace's most dutiful and most obedient servant.

"Charles Delafaye.†

"Bath, *May* 25, 1715."

The suspicion led to no such steps as King's correspondent desired, and its baselessness needs no elaborate proof. It is evidence of the fact, indeed, that Swift had more warrant for supposing his letters to have been tampered with in the Post Office than has generally been thought; but it is evidence of nothing else. A man is scarcely to be held responsible for all that is addressed to him in the midst of a doubtful and turbulent political crisis. No one doubts that there were Jacobites amongst Swift's friends: still more amongst his

* Irish Academy Pamphlets, Vol. XXXII.

† This letter, from Archbishop King's MSS. in the possession of Dr. Lyons, was printed in the Report of the Records Commissioners, 1871.

casual correspondents; but this did not make him one himself. His own words to King give a candid description of his position, although he was doubtless deceived as to the inclination of one at least amongst his patrons:—*

"Had there been ever the least overture or intent of bringing in the Pretender, during my acquaintance with the ministry, I think I must have been very stupid not to have picked out some discoveries or suspicions. And although I am not sure I should have turned informer, yet I am certain I should have dropped some general cautions, and immediately have retired. When people say things were not ripe at the queen's death, they say they know not what. Things were rotten: and had the ministers any such thoughts, they should have begun three years before; and they who say otherwise, understand nothing of the state of the kingdom at that time.

"But whether I am mistaken or not in other men, I beg your grace to believe, that I am not mistaken in myself. I always professed to be against the Pretender; and am so still. And this is not to make my court, (which I know is vain), for I own myself full of doubts, fears, and dissatisfactions; which I think on as seldom as I can: yet if I were of any value, the public may safely rely on my loyalty: because I look upon the coming of the Pretender as a greater evil, than any we are likely to suffer under the worst Whig ministry that can be found."

Swift felt annoyed that his rectitude should be doubted by one for whose sake he had risked the suspicion of his former friends as unduly favourable to a Whig. He had striven to put the best interpretation on King's conduct to Lord Oxford: and now King was the first to accuse him of having been ready to go all lengths with a treasonable ministry. On the 22nd of November, 1716, the Archbishop wrote:† "We have a strong report that my Lord Bolingbroke will return here and be pardoned: certainly it must not be for nothing. *I hope he can tell no ill story of you.*" The insinuation was one which might fairly rouse Swift's indignation. It not only charged himself with treason, but charged Bolingbroke, his friend and patron, with a readiness to purchase his own safety by betraying one whom he had himself misled. In the letter already partly quoted, he expresses surprise that his grace

* *Swift to King*, Dec. 16, 1716.

† *King to Swift*, Nov. 22, 1716.

could for so many years act along with him and be his correspondent, while believing him to be "a most false and vile man." The sting so rankles in Swift's mind that he speaks of it even in a business letter to Archdeacon Walls.* He has received, he says, a letter from the Archbishop, which was

"Civil and friendly except in one article, for which I will be revenged by an answer: he says 'tis confidently reported that Lord Bolingbroke is returning: that the consideration must be to discover secrets: and his Grace hopes that my Lord has no ill things to say of me. By which the Archbishop plainly lets me know that he believes all I have said of myself and the late Ministry with relation to the Pretender to be Court lies."

But while Swift refused to accept the tenets of the Jacobites, he held firmly to the opposition, as representing his former friends. King attempted what was scarcely a very creditable device for breaking Swift's credit with them. In a letter written shortly before, (Nov. 13, 1716), Swift had spoken frankly of the schemes of the Non-jurors as "a complication of as much folly, madness, hypocrisy, and mistake, as was ever offered to the world." He hinted even that the new Government might find in these mistakes an opportunity for recovering influence with the Irish clergy, by a little well-timed attention. Any personal view was the last present to Swift's mind in the suggestion. But King quoted the letter in London, as a proof that Swift was ready to change "to principles more in fashion, and wherein he might better find his account." † The report came to the ears of Erasmus Lewis and Bishop Atterbury: and to them Swift cleared himself, with warmth that was fully justified, of an accusation as hurtful to his honour as the charge of Jacobitism would have been to his political judgment.

For two or three years Swift stood apart and suspected as one of the small clique of Tories and High Churchmen who were fighting against the party of the Whigs and Moderates.

* *Swift to Walls*, Dec. 19, 1716. (Mr. Murray's MSS.)

† The words occur in a letter from Swift to Atterbury, July 18, 1717.

But fierce as the battle was, it exhausted itself. Antipathies died out in the presence of a danger that threatened both sides alike, and that changed the face of Irish politics. This change is the most marked feature of these six years, from 1714 to 1720. The English government had found, or fancied that it had found, a better way of governing Ireland than by raising one party against another. Support was now to be sought from none but the peculiarly "English party:" any thought of national feeling in Ireland was to be rigidly excluded from consideration. Even men like Archbishop King found themselves set aside. Nothing was left for such men but to strike a truce with those whose enemies they had hitherto been. There was no longer to be room in Ireland for two parties.

Beginning with this principle, the English Government aimed at preventing any Irish institution from becoming imbued with Irish ideas, and from thus growing too powerful. The Presbyterians were to be encouraged, because their encouragement tended to weaken the Irish Church: and the Irish Church was to be impregnated with the leaven of English Whiggism, which would leave its administration in the hands of unswerving and paid adherents of the government.

In 1719 the government pressed forward the Bill granting toleration to the Presbyterians. It was fiercely opposed: and in the Council passed only by the Lord-Lieutenant's casting vote. In the House of Lords the bench of Bishops almost unanimously opposed it: Archbishop King of Dublin, Archbishop Synge of Tuam, and Bishop Sterne of Clogher* united against it. But it passed by the votes of those whom King calls "our brethren lately sent us out of England:" † and became the forerunner of a long series of acts passed by the same means, and in pursuance of the same policy.

* Sterne, Swift's predecessor at St. Patrick's, had been moved from Dromore to Clogher, on the death of Dr. St. George Ashe, in 1717.

† *Archbishop King to Archbishop of Canterbury*, Nov. 10, 1719.

In common opposition to this policy, old enmities were buried. Swift and King came together once more. Swift strained every nerve to give the Church of Ireland a national spirit of her own, distinct from that imposed on her by Walpole. It seemed to him, at that time, no hopeless task: but he soon found he had to fight against the deliberate machinations of the English ministry, who designed to permit no such influence to the Church. It was thus that, beginning in 1714 as the adherent of a discomfited party, he became, in 1720, the champion of Irish nationality, the vindicator of Irish liberty, against the stratagems of the English Whigs.

Before we turn to his work in that capacity, we have to look to other sides of his life. During a part of these six years he was busily occupied with the arrangement of his business affairs.* He descends into the details of these with an almost painful minuteness, finding refuge in this, it would seem, from more painful thoughts. When he came to the Deanery he came with a burden of debt. Even debt did not prevent his making a benefaction to his own parish of Laracor, in the shape of some glebe lands; but it gave him the absorbing desire to increase his store, and to make himself secure against that most grinding form of dependence which poverty brings.

He was not, however, without other interest. As time went on he recovered from the first crushing weight of the blow that had fallen on himself and his friends. He renewed his correspondence with Pope, with Bolingbroke, with Arbuthnot, and even with one from whom he had been parted by political differences, Addison. From the first, indeed, the tone of Swift and his friends in regard to the new order of things is one of uncompromising hatred and contempt. The country, so one gathers

* The MS. letters to Archdeacon Walls have, as will be seen, been made use of wherever they could throw any light on Swift's life. But to produce voluminous directions as to the letting of his farms, the packing of his clothes, the management of his servants, and the storage of his wine, seemed scarcely worth the space which it would have demanded.

from their letters, seemed to them given over to hypocrisy, slavery, and the dunces. There was no place in its public business for an honest man; no favour to be expected from it for one who thought for himself, and respected his own independence. But one influence after another came to mitigate this. An attitude of despairing contempt is not very enduring: it is apt to relax itself. Swift was perhaps the first to suggest how the dunces could be made use of: and to find in them "tools as necessary for a good writer, as pens, ink, and paper." * Literary schemes recovered their interest. Swift renewed his own reading, and was busy in bringing slowly to full ripeness the work that was to attract his widest audience.† He suggested to Gay a new type of humour, in a travesty of pastoral poetry, which should give us pastorals for the Quakers, for the Chairmen, and even for Newgate. Prior was helping out the slender resources which his extravagance had left him, by publishing a subscription edition of his poems: and Swift, like others, was busy helping the poet's scheme. And at the same time that new interests were arising, the political horizon was clearing. Lord Oxford's trial began with all the usual deadly paraphernalia, and ended only in smoke.‡ He was once more greeted with cheers in the streets of London. The government was weakened by dissension in its own ranks. Opposition was threatening in and out of Parliament. Bolingbroke's banishment promised to come to an end. The wits found that, even without the aid of patronage, they could hold their own against the dunces. The hopes of Swift and of his associates became more bright. Writing to Bolingbroke, near

* *Swift to Pope*, Aug. 30, 1716.

† There are several indications that Gulliver was written during these years, and completed, in something like its present shape, in 1720. Vanessa is found alluding to an incident in the book about that time. At the close of the fourth part Gulliver casts anchor in the Downs, on 5th Dec., 1715; a few lines further on he says, "At the time I am writing, it is five years since my last return to England." Scott's Swift, Vol. XI., p. 369. Swift's imaginary dates are generally fixed by the time at which he wrote.

‡ July 1, 1717.

the end of 1719,* Swift speaks of the decay of his own powers: but it is in the half-jocular tone, which indicates rather an unsatisfied thirst for active employment than a fear of unfitness for it.

"I am six years older and twenty years duller. * * I have gone the round of all my stories with the younger people, and begin them again * * * I lay traps for people to desire I would shew them some things I have written, but cannot succeed. * * * If I can prevail on any one to personate a hearer and admirer, you would wonder what a favourite he grows."

When Swift wrote this, he was feeling the need of a more stirring arena of work. The circle of his friends was drawing together again: they were urging him to join them: and the invitation was not without its effect. The dangers that had threatened those whom he had supported, were now past: and the virulence of the libels on himself had lost some of its bitterness. The government which he detested, and whose continued power seemed to him a continued triumph for hypocrisy, a continued exaltation of the dunces over the wits, was shewing signs of weakness. Ireland, which had been broken into parties after the model of those in England, and where for a time the adherents of the government had carried the day, was now uniting in one strong spirit of antagonism to a government that expressed itself more and more through the mouthpiece of a narrow English clique, and in a policy disgracefully selfish. In politics and in literature at once, Swift was ready for a new start: and the opportunity for it was not long in coming.

But before we leave this intermediate halting place in Swift's career, there is another aspect of his life to be dealt with. The darkest passage in that life is the one which has gathered about it most of human interest: and the drama now passed through an important phase. To deal with this completely, it will be necessary to anticipate, for this purpose only, two or three of

* *Swift to Bolingbroke*, Dec. 19, 1719.

the years which followed Swift's return to active public life. These years complete the story of Vanessa.

It is needless to say that in the records of Swift's life as in the memory of men, the names of Stella and Vanessa are indissolubly linked together. They both present something of the same picture, so old in its pathos, and yet so fresh in its interest, of a woman's tenderness and a woman's passion beating against the loneliness, often the self-absorbed loneliness, of genius. His relations to both bring out the same strange contrast in his character—its sensitivity along with its fierce cynicism. Both are victims of the wounds which morbid gloom like that of Swift's inflicts on others, and on itself—wounds in the sharp pang of which its own weary burden finds a strange sort of relief, cruelly as they cut into the hearts of others. Once or twice Stella and Vanessa crossed one another's path. For years they shared Swift's interest. But, beyond this, there is no real reason why their stories should be told together. They worked on different moods, they touched on different parts of his life, they stood in totally different relations to him. To trace in the growth of one intimacy any conscious infidelity to the other, and to concoct a history of Swift's feeling, and its changes from Esther Johnson to Hester Vanhomrigh, is a task which nothing but the imagination of Swift's biographers has suggested to them. With other men such a process might have some fitness; but the peculiar aspects of Swift's relations to women have been made the subject of so much curious conjecture, that he may at least, in common fairness, claim to be acquitted of a vulgar and thoughtless infidelity. We see the truth about Stella and Vanessa, only when we look at them apart: and we must cast aside the inveterate habit which one biographer has borrowed from another, of considering them only as if their history made two sides of one story, two aspects of one passion.

We have already seen how, on the eve of quitting England in 1713, Swift had learned the truth about Vanessa's passion.

At first he had attempted to turn it aside, as most men would have done, by scarcely affecting to treat it seriously. But when he came back to London in the same year, it was to renew, almost in spite of himself, his former intimacy with Vanessa. She knew, and had learned to sympathise with, his political interests. Her circle was the same as his. She threw herself on his assistance and advice: and she sought his guidance in her studies. When she found him again near her, she probably forbore the more marked expression of her passion, likely at once to have alienated and to have alarmed him. But the intimacy was renewed, and the recollection of the few letters written to him when absent, perhaps made Swift more tender to the feeling which had prompted them, however unwise it might be. To have checked it would have been doubtless wiser: but the dangers were less visible to Swift than they would have been to other men. So matters drifted on, till the midsummer of 1714, when Swift quitted London for the solitude of Mr. Gery's house at Letcombe. His first letter thence was to Vanessa, probably for no other reason than that she knew most of his movements, and had followed most closely his recent hopes and fears. But he soon became cautious. She pressed him for advice as to her family troubles. Her mother was dead and had left debts: her younger sister was not strong: her surviving brother was a good-for-nothing spendthrift: and her own fortune was in danger. Swift gives her such advice as he can, and obtains for her an advance of money: but ruthlessly hints a doubt that some of her troubles were swelled by affectation; possibly, even, he may have thought, expressly intended to draw the bonds of their intimacy more close. When about to leave for Ireland after the Queen's death, he writes to Vanessa with the utmost caution: "his letters will be few," and if she comes over, "he will see her very seldom." He knows how sharp is the tongue of scandal, and he has no wish that it should be busy with her name or his own. When she does come to look after her pro-

perty, his letters continue to have the same cautious tone, inconsistent with the notion either that he was throwing off, for Vanessa's sake, any former bond, or that he was suggesting to her any hopes of a closer tie in the future. "I say all this," he adds, after one of his cautions, "out of the perfect esteem and friendship I have for you." These are words that no man could use to wipe out the memory of an accepted passion; they could be intended only to prevent its growth. Settling in Ireland, she lived partly in Dublin, and partly at Marlay Abbey, near Celbridge, which she had inherited from her father: and his earlier letters after her arrival prove that he was almost jestingly deprecating a passion which he called indiscreet, and which he fancied, however wrongly, was not absolutely sincere. This coldness inflames her the more: she urges his presence on the old excuse of wanting his advice. "What can be wrong," she asks, "in seeing and advising an unhappy young woman?" "Counterfeit" she says, "that indulgent friend you once were;"—still without a hint that he had ever encouraged other thoughts than those of friendship. He is provoked at times to anger at what he holds to be a whimsical folly: but his anger only goads her passion still more. "Treat me as you do," she says, "and you will not be made uneasy by me long." "See me and speak kindly" she cries; without that kindness there is "something in your look so awful, that it strikes me dumb." Swift might have been wiser to have been still cold and restrained in his reply: but he could force himself to no more than a kindly assurance, as far as possible removed either from the ardour of a lover, or the effusive insincerity of one who was conscious that he had wronged her, in word or deed. When she changes to threatenings he meets it only by banter: when scandal begins to be busy, he plainly tells her—again neither like the ardent nor the faithless lover—"that it was what he had foreseen: that it must be submitted to: and that by the help of discretion it would wear off."

What, then, was it that Vanessa's friendship meant for Swift? He might have been wiser to crush it at once and for ever: instead of that, for nearly eight years, he strove alternately to humour or to keep it in check, and failed hopelessly in the end. During these years what side of his nature was it that this friendship laid hold of?

Not, we fear it must be said, the best. When Swift was absorbed with the outside homage that was paid to him: when he put his pen, however honestly, yet unreservedly, at the service of a party; when he was elated with a somewhat truculent triumph, then it was that Vanessa's friendship grew, and with these scenes it was chiefly associated. She flattered his weakest side: she learned the catchwords of his party, and, unlike Stella, she became, as she fancied to please Swift, a "politician."* From very hatred of cant, Swift at times professed that creed of worldly selfishness, which despair often suggests to every man, but of which no man desires to have a reminder at his hand. The maxims of such a creed are repeated for behoof of Vanessa, much as they might have been for Matthew Prior, with his motto of "Vive la bagatelle!" "Live for the good that the present moment can give:" "riches are nine-tenths of happiness, and health is the other tenth:" "converse with fools, and let them help you to avoid the spleen"—these, and the like, are the phrases scattered through the letters written to Vanessa. They serve, along with other signs, to show us that the friendship, bred in the heated air of political faction, satisfied, after all, only a small part of Swift's nature. The cynic rarely loves to have his cynicism returned upon his hands. Cynicism Swift had in plenty: it was not this that a woman's love ought to have brought to him. But Vanessa's love involved little more than

* Contrast this with what he says to Stella, "I never knew whether you were Whigs or Tories" (the Journal always speaks as if to Stella and Rebecca Dingley together); "and I value your conversation the more that it never turned on politics."

the ambition to have her passion returned, and the desire to attain her end by humouring a mood that needed rather to be soothed and changed. The friendship had begun in literary guidance: it was strengthened by flattery: it lived on a cold and almost stern repression, fed by confidences as to literary schemes, and by occasional literary compliments: but it never came to have a real hold over Swift's heart.

Slight as was its hold, however, when Vanessa had settled down in Ireland, when she had extorted from Swift, by the very vehemence of her passion, some tender apologies for his seeming harshness, the evil was done. Vanessa continued to pour forth her passion, jealous of anything that implied disbelief in its reality, indignant with any jest that seemed to smile at it. In 1716, its limits were even more definitely fixed. Swift and Stella then entered into that formal bond which seemed to one or to both to express most fitly the relation in which they stood to one another.* That tie, the truest and most tender that was ever to bind Swift, was henceforth safe, he might deem, from intrusion or comparison. It was a tie as to the outward signs of which all the world was free to judge: but the real meaning of which was hidden from the public gaze. The friendship for Vanessa was suffered to drift on, but all outward signs of it were most carefully dissembled. His relations to Vanessa might, as Swift clearly feared, become the source of a vulgar scandal from which his pride revolted. The affection for Stella was avowed; but beyond was a sacred region, into the mystery of which he would not suffer the world to pry.

On this limited footing the friendship for Vanessa continued. It played only on the outside of Swift's life. Its course continued the same: on Vanessa's side, the fervency of passion: on Swift's, at times, a burst of real tenderness, occasionally a tribute of almost exaggerated compliment, varied now and then, by an impulse of uncontrollable impatience. Foolish

* The circumstances of the marriage are noticed further on. The evidence for it will be found in Appendix IV.

his action may have been; but it was not unnatural. Moody and ill-at-ease as he then was, he was ready to accept as the best solution of a difficulty, a make-shift state of things, by which Vanessa was soothed. He attempted, indeed, what was an easy, but not a very complimentary, expedient, to attract Vanessa's love into another channel. The younger Sheridan tells us of a certain Dean Winter who was brought to pay his suit to Vanessa: and Deane Swift adds as another suitor, Dr. Price, who became Bishop of Meath, and afterwards Archbishop of Cashel.* But Vanessa's passion had at least so much of the dignity of truth, that it would not be fooled out of its chosen aim. The old intimacy, on something of the old terms, was allowed to run on. The tie to Stella had been rivetted by what was only an empty and secret ceremonial; and Swift perhaps conceived that a friendship, flattering to Vanessa's passion, might, without wrong, be added to it.

When the intimacy had thus gained a new lease of life for want of the resolution that might have broken it off, Swift revived one of its earlier associations. In 1713 he had written the poem of *Cadenus and Vanessa*,† which remains as the monument of the ill-fated passion. It had been written when the first revelation of Vanessa's passion had struck him with

"Shame, disappointment, guilt, remorse."

This poem he now revised;‡ and as it is the revised form which we may conclude has come down to us, the examination of it will not be without its use.

Originally the poem was no doubt intended to recount, for

* Delany mentions neither: so the reader must judge for himself on the probability of the story, for which the evidence is certainly not very strong.

† It is scarcely necessary to say that Cadenus is a transposition for Decanus or the Dean. Vanessa is "Hessy" or "Missessy," with the first syllable of Vanhomrigh prefixed.

‡ This revision has been hitherto overlooked: but it is not without importance. In a letter of May 12th, 1719, he writes: "Vous aurez vos vers à revoir quand j'aurai mes pensées et mon temps libre: la muse viendra."

Vanessa's ear alone, the story of her passion. But it is not a narrative only: we may read it rather as an attempt to account for that passion in the way least wounding to Vanessa's pride. Her gifts and endowments of mind and body are set forth: she is the chosen object of the gods' attention: her advent is to test the discernment of the world: her infatuation for the Dean is explained as the suspension of judgment with which an angry goddess visits the resistance to her sway. But strong as the passion might be, its open declaration too had to be explained: and it is thus the explanation comes.

> "Two maxims she could still produce,
> And sad experience taught their use:
> That virtue, pleased by being shown,
> Knows nothing which it dares not own;
> Can make us without fear disclose
> Our inmost secrets to our foes:
> That common forms were not designed
> Directors to a noble mind."

In these verses Lord Orrery finds an expression of the extraordinary opinion that vice turns to virtue when it loses shame. Delany rightly deems this a distortion of their meaning: and surely we may see in them only a bold and hazardous truth, whose motive is the justification, *to Vanessa*, of Vanessa's own avowal. There are other verses which Lord Orrery and Delany unite in condemning.

> "Where never blush was called in aid,
> That spurious virtue in a maid,
> A virtue best at second-hand;
> They blush, because they understand."

But this too, we are entitled to excuse, as a truth, however one-sided, which Swift hazarded only that he might defend Vanessa's self-respect.

Then comes a passage in the poem, which may perhaps be accepted as an addition made by Swift, when the poem was revised in 1719. The Dean now saw that the passion was not a transient one. Not its rise only, but its continuance and its

deeper meaning must be touched upon. Vanessa may have demanded a solution of her doubts: and Swift had before him a delicate task which he managed with his usual want of skill to gauge a woman's heart. It is Cadenus who now becomes—unlike the context of the poem—the pupil whose crass stupidity lags behind Vanessa's teaching:

> "Her scholar is not apt to learn:
> Or wants capacity to reach
> The science she designs to teach:
> Wherein his genius was below,
> The skill of every common beau,
> Who, though he cannot spell, is wise
> Enough to read a lady's eyes,
> And will each accidental glance
> Interpret for a kind advance."

Then comes the hardest and most disputed lines of all:—

> "But what success Vanessa met
> Is to the world a secret yet.
> Whether the nymph, to please her swain,
> Talks in a high romantic strain:
> Or whether he at last descends
> To act with less seraphic ends:
> Or, to compound the business, whether
> They temper love and books together:
> Must never to mankind be told,
> Nor shall the conscious Muse unfold."

No lines more unfortunate were ever penned: so much we are bound to allow. To defend them is impossible: but the coarsest suggestion that may be drawn from them, is not unlikely only, it is impossible. The poem was published at Vanessa's wish: a wish that would never have arisen, had it hinted at her shame. We must find another meaning, and it is not hard to do so. Swift had before suggested a mere intellectual friendship, in place of that complete union to which Vanessa's passion clearly tended. These were the evident alternatives: and he hints at a third as a compromise, perhaps soothing to Vanessa, which might have linked the intellectual friendship with something of a closer tie. If a doubt

of its honour is suggested by the ambiguity of the words, we must remember for whose ears it was destined. The poem was written, not for the public, but for Vanessa and for her only. She knew what was the truth: and Swift clearly tells her that the secret must remain their own. It would have been well for her memory had she remembered his advice. Whether that advice involved disloyalty to Stella, or was excused by the embarrassment in which Swift found himself, is a point of casuistry which each reader must determine for himself.

This understanding reached, the letters became more cordial. Swift soothes her with compliments, which it is possible that he did not expect to be interpreted too literally. She is told of her superiority to other women, whose caprices Swift despised. She receives his literary confidences.* She is promised a sequel to *Cadenus and Vanessa* which should celebrate the history of their friendship. But, in spite of cordiality, he trusted neither his own name nor hers to scandal. He seems never, till a year or two before her death, to have visited her at Celbridge. With a friendship so limited, her passion could not rest satisfied. In 1720, she allows it to break forth in a torrent of remonstrance. For ten weeks she has not seen him, "It is not in the power of time or accidents to lessen her inexpressible passion." "The love I bear you is not seated only in my soul: there is not a single atom of my frame that is not blended with it." Religion cannot comfort her: "were I an enthusiast, you would be the deity I should worship." "Sometimes you strike me with that prodigious awe, I tremble with fear: at other times a charming compassion shines through your countenance which

* In a letter written shortly before her death, she makes a clear reference to a scene in *Gulliver's Travels*, the MS. of which she must therefore have seen. "One of these animals was so pleased with me, that it seized me with such a panic that I apprehended nothing less than being carried up to the top of the house and served as a friend of yours was." The reference is plainly to Gulliver's adventure when carried to the house-top by the monkey in Brobdingnag. Scott's *Swift*, Vol. XI., p. 156.

revives my soul." To outbursts like these Swift replies only by calm advice, which shows how little he returned the passion. "Esteem, love, and value," are the words he uses—words cold enough in such a connexion: but he entreats that she "would not make herself or him unhappy by imaginations."

These words revealed to Vanessa the real hopelessness of her long struggle. We need not, in excusing Swift, blind ourselves to the pathos of the last scene of all. She seems to have been at Dublin when this letter came: but she at once retired to Marlay Abbey, which was some ten miles off, and which remains to this day the monument of a love which no recklessness, no folly, no self-abandonment can deprive of the tragic dignity of its end.* For the first time jealousy is allowed to have its course: she puts her fate to the touch and writes to Stella to ask whether she is the wife of Swift. Stella, secure in her own assured position, however little that position had been asserted, avowed her marriage to Vanessa, and sent the letter on to Swift. She could have chosen no method more certain to crush a rival whose claims she had hitherto disdainfully ignored. Vanessa must have felt that her last card was played: that she had defied a rival whose shadow had ever lain across her path. On receiving the letter, Swift rode, in bitter anger, to Marlay Abbey. He entered unannounced: without a word threw on the table an envelope

* Marlay Abbey stands close to the village of Celbridge and beside the Liffey, which flows through the estate. The river is in this place broken up by islets and rocks, and runs between high wooded banks. The slopes on either side are covered with fine old trees, chiefly beeches and elms. Close to the house, between it and the river, there stands a fine oriental palm, which must have been there before Vanessa's day. Across the river and beyond the garden the chief feature of the grounds is a splendid yew plantation, the growth of centuries—more notable surely than the laurels which Scott's informant found the characteristic of the place, as they certainly are not now. Going up the river side, a path leads to a point in the rocks, where there is a seat with steps leading down to the water. It is quiet and shady, and has a pleasant outlook upon the river rushing broad and full amongst its rocks. This is the spot which tradition represents as the seat where Swift and Vanessa used to read together.

containing Vanessa's own letter: and riding back to the Deanery, saw her no more. Years of irresolution on his own part, of hopeless passion on Vanessa's, of perhaps undue resignation on the part of Stella, had done their work. Each felt that a tragedy, not to be wiped out of their lives, had run its course. Its first victim was Vanessa, whose crushed and baffled passion brought her death.

She lived only for a few weeks after the crushing blow had fallen. Before her death she had time only to collect her forces for such vengeance as was in her power. In the interval, if we believe the common account—and the date of her existing will perhaps confirms that account—she revoked a will in favour of Swift, and appointed as her executors and residuary legatees, Judge Marshall and Bishop Berkeley of Cloyne. Swift was not named even amongst the smaller legatees who were remembered by gifts of a few pounds to buy a ring. The omission could not have been accidental: and each must judge for himself what was the feeling with which that omission was made, and what was the strength of love that sought this way of satisfying its vengeance. Common report added, but added falsely, another condition to the will. Vanessa was said to have left injunctions to her executors to publish the letters between Swift and herself, and to give to the world the poem of *Cadenus and Vanessa*. The will contains no such injunction: but it is hardly possible to suppose that the letters were left to the executors without some implied injunction of the kind. Bishop Berkeley wisely decided to suppress the correspondence: and it never saw the light till Sir Walter Scott was able to publish the letters from a transcript made by Judge Marley, which passed into the hands of Scott's friend, Mr. Berwick. The poem was published soon after Vanessa's death, which took place at the close of May, 1723. The best proof that Swift saw and dreaded the interpretation which the world might place upon the verses, is to be found in the shock the publication caused him. Angry with himself, tortured at

once by remorse and by indignation at the tangle of circumstance that had woven itself round him, he withdrew for a time to the South of Ireland, and left Stella to wait, alone, for the time when his remorse would seek consolation from herself.*

Side by side with, and yet distinct from, the story of Vanessa with its strange mixture of vanity and tragedy, there runs the far more intricate story of Swift and Stella. We have seen the limitations of the bond that held him to Vanessa. But Stella's love was based on no chance intimacy. It was entwined with the memory of his earliest hopes, and in spite of passing clouds, it retained to the end its living power over him. There is here no story with imprudence for its origin, irresolution to confirm it, and mingled harshness and delusion for its close; there is in it rather the working of his heart, the central tenderness that gave a bright lining to all his gloom. But, not less important in his biography, it tells also of the tortures which a morbid obedience to rashly formed and perverse resolves, continued to inflict both on Swift himself and on her who was dearest to him. Without the story of Vanessa, Swift's life would have stood out, more clear, more complete, and less ambiguous: † without the story of Stella, it would have been a maimed and lopped fragment, with one half of the man's nature wanting. Round this incident the liveliest human interest, the most natural human feeling, spent upon his history, must ever gather: and we cannot, therefore, afford lightly either to discard or to accept any fragment of evidence bearing on the point.

* An anecdote is told of her reference on one occasion to the poem: almost the solitary instance of her jealousy. A gentleman in her presence remarked that Vanessa must be an extraordinary woman that could inspire the Dean to to write so finely upon her. Stella smiled, and said she thought it scarcely so clear: "the Dean, it was known, could write finely on a broomstick." (Delany's *Observations*, p. 58.) And these words must have been spoken after Vanessa's death.

† So entirely is the evidence wanting, as I hold, to prove what Sheridan, for instance, maintains, that the love of Vanessa was a real passion with Swift, which did interfere with, and might easily have overwhelmed, his feeling for Stella.

We have seen how that tie was first formed, on the simplest and most easy foundation. Dissect as we may that early life with Sir William Temple, we cannot get beyond a few simple facts that tell us all we need care to know about it. A somewhat vain, imperious, and irritable master: a youth whose pride was all the more fiery because it was necessarily restrained, and whose natural melancholy was deepened by dependence. On the other side a girl, still more likely to be overawed by the dignity of her distant kinsman, companionless in the staid and solemn household, save for the youth to whom she owed all that she had learned, whose character must even then have moulded her own, and about whose future she must already have had mysterious anticipations. The Pindarics would be read by her without too great critical severity. She must have watched, perhaps with special guidance, the part Swift played in the literary controversy that occupied her master's leisure. Under Swift's tuition, her mind received that masculine simplicity which he prized for its contrast to what he held, with morbid relentlessness of insight, to be the tricks and disguises of the other sex. She had learned to regard him as her guide and protector: she had virtually, in retiring to Ireland after Temple's death, placed her life's happiness in his keeping: and henceforward she became his chosen companion and friend. The choice was one he never affected to conceal, though he fenced the companionship round with the safeguards that might keep scandal at a distance. When another sought for Stella's love, Swift repelled the intrusion, yet without breaking through those limitations on his own friendship that had made such intrusion possible. For a time the relations between them were accepted without misgiving by Stella. She had all his thoughts to herself. Glimpses of ambition were opening, which she no doubt shared: and these early years at Laracor, with occasional visits to London, were years of peace for both. Stella was buoyed up with hope: and Swift was soured by none of the

misanthropy of his later years. When he went to London on the memorable visit that began in 1710, it was reluctantly that he quitted Stella and Laracor—the canal, the willows, the fish-pond—all associated with her companionship. For two years at least, all his thoughts are hers. His chief desire is to return: his aim is confined to bringing his mission to a successful issue, that will make the church his debtor: his ambition to attaining a future that will be easy for himself and Stella. But presently, his life becomes more crowded. The intense desire of power was roused again within him. The companion of ministers, the champion of a party, the guide of a policy, he became immersed in the excitement of the game of politics, and lost all but the sense of the stakes. All this raises a veil between him and Stella, and seems to set her image further from him. We need not assume that Vanessa ever usurped Stella's place in his regard: but yet Vanessa was inevitably associated with the scene in which he played so large a part, and the thought of which was so flattering to his pride. When he came back to Ireland in 1713, it was only for a short banishment, during which all his thoughts were of England; and when he returned finally in August, 1714, it was in a spirit of disappointed ambition, and despairing gloom. The real union between himself and Stella, which may have seemed near in 1710, and which an earlier satisfaction of his ambition might probably have brought about, was now more distant than ever: and all the more that he now found himself embarrassed by Vanessa's passionate pursuit.

It is clear indeed that, although there was no estrangement, no very special warmth attended the meeting of Stella and Swift on his return to Dublin. His correspondence gives no evidence even of their frequent intercourse in the period that immediately succeeded: and in the unpublished letters to Archdeacon Walls during the three or four years beginning with 1714, messages are indirectly given through Walls, which

convey no impression of very intimate relations. "My service to Gossip Doll (Walls' wife) and the *ladies*" is the phrase with which most of the letters close. "Pray shew the enclosed," he says, in a letter of 1716, referring to a snub administered by himself to a would-be wit, "to Mrs. Johnson, to see whether she be of my opinion." The wish to know her opinion shews that there was no breach, but the asking it through another as surely shews that their intercourse was by no means regular. In another letter,* he speaks of reproaches from the "ladies" for his not going to Dromore: and the excuse is again indirectly sent: "Gossip Doll" is to tell the ladies that he will write soon, but "as for coming down, 'tis impossible." "Your black privy counsellor," he says again playfully to Archdeacon Walls;†—"do not be alarmed, I mean only Mrs. Johnson." Elsewhere he speaks of enclosing a letter for Mrs. Johnson, in one to Walls. Scattered phrases like these shew that Swift was in no regular correspondence with Stella: that the fact of their marriage was unknown to Walls: but that, indirect as their intercourse now was, it was yet easy and friendly enough.

Just then, while still humouring Vanessa's passion, Swift was joined by the formal rites of marriage, with Stella.‡ In his mysterious life, no action was more mysterious than this. A proneness to tender emotion, along with a constitutional thinness of temperament that allows the emotion easily to die away, is no possible explanation of the alternate tenderness and coldness in Swift. But we must expect to find him in his life, something the same as he is in his books. In the latter he often applies the scalpel with an unnatural and cynical serenity, to the very sufferings of humanity that have excited

* *Swift to Walls.* Dec. 30, 1716. (Mr. Murray's MSS.)

† *Swift to Walls.* June 18, 1716. (Mr. Murray's MSS.)

‡ The fact of the marriage is a disputed one: but the reasons which lead me to think that it admits of no doubt, are given in Appendix IV. Meanwhile for the purpose of the narrative this fact is assumed as true.

—nay, are at the moment exciting,—his pity. So it is with his own life. His feelings are strong: but a certain intensity of will, a force of intellectual passion, is perpetually torturing and crushing them. So dealt with, by what was undoubtedly a morbid perversity, these feelings, keen as they were to begin with, became cold and dead under the chilling influence of a gloomy misanthropy. The result never shews itself more clearly, in the havoc it wrought on himself and others, than in the story of which we have now to seek the clue.

There were not wanting motives that might make Stella inclined to the step. In 1716, she could not fail to see that the tie that bound them together must be closer or must end. She had waited long and patiently: but she had found that her patience was rewarded only by seeing the love for which she had given up her life, growing cold amidst the calls of ambition, and colder still in the gloom that followed defeat. The meeting after four years of separation had shewn her that Swift had formed plans in which she had little share, and that he either could not or would not accept her love as satisfaction for the blank that defeat of these plans brought. She must doubtless have suspected the passion pressed on Swift by Vanessa, and the degree to which Swift had humoured it. The gradual fading of the hope that she had cherished so long, told on her health, and Swift was not so blind as not to perceive Stella's suffering. In these circumstances Swift employed, it seems, his friend and old college tutor, Dr. St. George Ashe, Bishop of Clogher, to inquire from Stella the reason of her sadness. He may himself have shrunk from the interview, in the thought of the wrong done to Stella by his weakness in suffering Vanessa's love. He can scarcely have failed to know what Stella had hoped for, and what her stedfast devotion now gave her the right to claim. Stella told the Bishop that she had waited patiently while it had seemed that there might be reason, in Swift's interest, for delay: but that now her waiting was rewarded only by coldness and neglect. Such indifference

gave slander a ground for attacking her good name: in one way only could that slander be met.

Swift agreed to make Stella his wife, so far as the formal ceremony of marriage could do so: but upon the condition that they should be to one another only as they had been before, and that the world should know nothing of the new bond. The ceremony was performed in the garden of the Deanery, by the same friend, who had been the bearer of the message, the Bishop of Clogher, in the year 1716. The Dean and Stella continued to live in separate houses. No concealment was attempted of the fact that they were to each other friends of no common nearness: but slander was kept at a distance by the care with which Swift fenced round their intercourse. They never met except in the presence of a third person, and Swift, as we have seen, often chose an indirect channel to convey a message to his wife. No woman's constancy would have stood a harder trial: only an empty ceremony had rewarded her years of lonely endurance, and even that ceremony was to be a secret assurance to herself that calumny was baseless, not an open pledge behind the conditions of which the world would have no right to pry. Slander was still to be fenced against, not defied. So far as their lifetime was concerned, the conditions imposed on the ceremony made it useless for any purpose whatever. How could calumny be stopped, by a formality, and a secret formality, whose hollowness Stella herself knew, and of whose existence the world knew nothing? Stella may have had other motives for her original request: but in accepting Swift's conditions, her only hope, beyond mere compliance with his wish, must have been that some day, if posterity should suspect her honour, the eventual announcement of her marriage might prove its suspicions baseless.

What, then, were the motives that prompted, on Swift's side, a compromise so strange, and in what mood did each accept it? Swift had doubtless at one time looked on Stella as his future

wife. But such thoughts had now passed away. Disappointment was pressing heavily on him. Defeat had just befallen him, and he had not yet recast his weapons for a new fight, or roused his genius to new efforts. His friends were at a distance, some of them scattered in exile. He felt himself thrust, perhaps permanently, into obscurity. It was scarcely wonderful that thoughts which might have been cherished in other days, when his hopes were high, should now grow dim and fade. He had striven, too, for pecuniary independence as a means by which he might make himself free in action: and the fruit of his long efforts was a burden of debt. We have seen how, prompted by the memory of his early days, and the endless embarrassments with which scanty means torture a proud man, Swift had fixed for himself, with almost morbid pertinacity, a rigid rule of parsimony. That parsimony involved no sordid avarice, because at this very time he was sinking some of his means in a gift to his parish. But it determined him never to entangle either himself, or one dear to him, in the endless petty cares of domestic poverty.

Weighed down by circumstances as he was, many men might have sought the quiet of marriage, as a resting-place from his toils. It was not so with Swift. Defeated, powerless, growing old, attacked on every side by virulent enemies, he set aside, with a morbid self-torture, not so rare that it need astonish us, the quiet comfort that married life might have brought. He exaggerated the difficulties in its way. Nor were other motives wanting to increase his sullen determination. Married life might have seemed to involve an oblivion more complete than his ambition desired, of all the stormy scenes he had left. He might reject the prospect of settling down into the monotonous life of an Irish ecclesiastic, amidst a people whom he despised. He might still see fights before him, where it would be better that he should stand unencumbered and alone. His health, too, was filling him with terrible forebodings: worn by the *saeva indignatio* that wasted

his life, wearied by the struggle, burdened by warnings of decay, he might feel that side of his nature which a woman's love could touch, leaning more and more to the cold impassiveness, to which it had ever been inclined. Swift tells a friend, even in earlier life, that his temperament was cold, and that this was a safeguard to his heart. His biographers have not unfairly accepted his own account, and have explained by its means the mystery of his relation to Stella. With some reservations this may be true: but the reservations are worth remark. A very little knowledge of human nature tells us, that men do not commonly proclaim their coldness of temperament, when it is so marked as to provoke ridicule rather than inspire respect. Nor are the qualities we find in Swift, exactly those we should expect to find in a nature over which passion had no sway. But without ascribing to Swift all that a strained interpretation of his own words has been thought to convey, we may still find in him one of the most striking instances of a phase of human nature that is not uncommon, where the very force of intellectual passion acts with the expulsive power of a new emotion upon other feelings. It was the consuming intensity of his hate and scorn that left so little room for feelings that with most men are so strong. With the growth of his satiric vehemence, these other feelings became even more straitened and more cold.

To all these motives for Swift's action, we must add the entanglement in which he found himself from suffering Vanessa's passion to live on. This would not argue in Swift any real division of feeling between Stella and Vanessa, and much less any idea of conscious deception of the latter. But he had rashly allowed her passion to continue: he knew how quick slander was: and he was certain that his announced marriage would rouse Vanessa's rancour, and make his name a jest. Prudence, natural indeed though scarcely dignified, was added to his other motives for keeping secret the concession that he made to Stella's wish.

On Stella's side, whatever her own hopes had been, it was enough that Swift willed it so. Moulded by his teaching, inured to patience, used to accept his will as law, she submitted to the conditions he imposed. Had she any stings of jealousy, these might now be quieted by the thought that, formal as was her own tie to him, it was closer than any other. But she had, indeed, little choice in the matter. She had asked security for her reputation. Swift gave it; and its secresy was a condition which, harsh as it was, might fairly be said not to lessen its efficacy to soothe her conscientious scruples.

She bowed to the conditions, and allowed no outward sign, at least, of her discontent, to shew itself. Their intercourse remained at once as limited, and yet as easy, as before. She was addressed by Swift, and addressed him, in a tone of cordial and often affectionate friendliness. To the world no change appeared in her manner to him who had been "her early and her only guide," and whose wife she now was.

Swift's determination may have been mistaken, morbid, even callous: but this need not lessen our reverence for Stella's devotion. It was not hers to criticise his motives: it was hers only to be loyal to his decision. She knew that the secret of her rightful place as his wife was safe in the keeping of a very few chosen friends. Before her death others might share it: in the end the world might know it: but meanwhile it need go no further.

A few years later—about the year 1723—Swift's decision seems to have relented. It is to that year that it seems proper to assign a story which we may infer to have been told to Dr. Sheridan by Stella on her death-bed. She then announced to one whose honesty she could entirely trust, the secret of her life. But she told him also that about 1723, Swift had been ready to undo the conditions. By that time his hopes had revived, and the morbid gloom was lessened. Further, Vanessa as we have already seen, had drawn upon herself the announce-

ment of the marriage, and, at the same time, the wrath of Swift. To soothe Stella's just indignation, Swift may well have offered to proclaim to the world the position of his wife.*

But her own health was now gone. Her years of patient loyalty, she may have thought, might now be prolonged to the end. She feared, and feared with reason, that the place to which he called her was one which she could scarcely hope to fill. The offer was what she must have chiefly prized: and that she now had. She voluntarily resigned her rights: and answered that it was now "too late." A few weeks more brought the death of Vanessa, the publication of "*Cadenus and Vanessa*," with all its ambiguous phrases: and the noisy rumours which would only have been kept alive by any publication of her own marriage to the Dean. Stella wisely resolved to wait and trust her cause to the judgment of posterity.

* See Appendix V. for an examination of the evidence on which this narrative of Swift's offered announcement of the marriage is based.

CHAPTER XIII.

SWIFT AS IRISH PATRIOT.

1720—1725.

ÆTAT. 52—57.

Growth of an Irish party—Swift joins it from hatred to the Whigs—The ills of Ireland—Absentees or Out-liers—Neglect of former restrictive statutes—Degradation of resident landlords—Wretchedness of the tenants—Professional Beggars—Irish affairs between 1714 and 1720—Swift as Irish Patriot—The *Universal Use of Irish Manufactures*—Prosecution of the Printer—Duke of Grafton stays proceedings—Swift's *Apologia* to Pope—Swift against an Irish Bank—The Copper Coinage—Wood's Patent—Outcry against it—M. B. *Drapier*—The details of the patent—The Committee of Inquiry—The *Second Letter*—The *Third Letter*—Are the Irish slaves?—*The Fourth Letter*—The *Drapier's* Protest—Proclamation against the Author—Carteret as Lord Lieutenant—Swift's letter to him—The *Letter* to Lord Midleton—The Bill of Indictment against the printer thrown out by the Grand Jury—The Drapier's Fame—The *Fifth Letter*—Walpole's New Scheme for Ireland—Archbishop Boulter and his rule.

We have seen how, in 1720, the position of parties in Ireland had been modified, and smaller differences forgotten. For us the central interest now lies in the struggle maintained against that narrow and exclusive clique which governed Ireland in avowed contempt of all phases of Irish opinion, and which considered itself as placed there only to subordinate the good of the country to English interests.

Amidst the struggles of contending factions the real evils of the country had been overlooked: the need of reform had occupied the attention only of an insignificant handful. None had yet succeeded in rousing a national spirit to resist the nation's wrongs. Over-insistance on these wrongs was looked upon as veiled Jacobitism. The theorists proposed their schemes

timidly, and the Government neither accepted responsibility for the wrongs, nor troubled themselves to find a remedy.

In putting on his armour for a new fight, Swift's first motive was probably merely opposition to the Whigs. He looked back with bitterness to the fall of his friends. He detested what he held to be the cant of the Whigs, and their travesty of liberty. He was imbued with the fervent hatred of the Whig party that inspired his own literary clique. He was angry at his own banishment. Irish questions had, indeed, previous to this, occasionally excited his attention: but his real interest in Irish politics only now begins.

His attitude in this new struggle is not hard to define. He scorned Jacobitism as little more than a frivolity. He set himself to decry the rampant bitterness of the High Church zealots. He had nothing but contempt for doctrines of divine right and absolute prerogative.* But he was opposed to the landlords on account of their aggressive selfishness towards his own Church. He denounced Presbyterian encroachments from his life-long detestation of the fanaticism and doctrinal bigotry which he held them to express. He believed the Whig government of Ireland to be a government founded on corruption. All these motives went to swell the current of his indignation against Irish wrongs.

It is no part of the biography of Swift to give a full account of the economic history of Ireland in his time. But to illustrate his work, it is absolutely necessary to know something of the condition of national ruin and semi-barbarism which produced at once the motive in Swift, and the ready response in his audience. We may take the picture of this condition, as given us in the contemporary memoirs, in the pamphlets of Swift himself, and in others that dealt at the same time with

* "He was reckoned by his friends," says Deane Swift in a MS. letter in Lord Cork's possession, "to be a republican." Rash as the expression is, it doubtless expressed a partial truth, as regards the bold front which Swift maintained against authority unjustly exercised.

the same questions, and were almost certainly familiar to the circle amidst which he moved.

In Swift's day the most palpable evil in Irish life was that of which, ever since, so much has been heard—the number of absentee landlords, or "outliers," as they were called. In former days, under sovereigns who looked to the grantees of lands in Ireland for the defence of the kingdom against sudden rebellion, there had been a summary remedy for absenteeism. Again and again, the English kings, from the Plantagenets to the Tudors, had been obliged to equip costly armies to stamp out rebellion, to which the absence of the English landlords had been an inducement. The burden on the Treasury was unwelcome, and statutes of increasing severity had marked their sense of this breach of contract on the part of these English owners. By a statute of Richard II., two-thirds of the estate of an absentee were forfeited to the Crown. The Lancastrian kings had proceeded on the same policy: and Henry VIII. had summarily resumed the whole Irish estates of some English nobles who were habitual absentees. Even under the early Stuarts the same course was pursued: and security was at least taken that absenteeism should not free a landlord from contributing heavily to the revenues of the country upon whose resources he preyed: while the holding of Irish offices was burdened with the requirement of residence in Ireland. But more recently a change had sprung up. Residence had not been encouraged. Statutes to enforce it still remained in the statute-book: but they were a dead letter. The landlord drew his rent from Ireland, but did not help to pay her taxes. He spent the rent in England: and, since lavish ostentation might help to social consideration one whose Irish blood would otherwise have been a bar to him, he frequently spent more than his rent, and left his estate encumbered with mortgages in the hands of English mortgagees. The holder of an Irish office thought only of its emoluments, and was indignant at any ill-timed suggestion of a visit to the country burdened with

his support, and nominally entitled to his services. There were stories of those who had landed at Ringsend on Saturday night, had received the Sacrament at the nearest parish church on Sunday, taken the oaths on Monday morning in the Courts, and set sail for England in the afternoon, leaving no trace of their existence in Ireland save their names on her Civil List as recipients of a salary.*

By this custom it was calculated at least £600,000 per annum, out of a total rental of £1,800,000, left the country, and was spent in England. The blame for it is not to be laid altogether at the landlords' door. There was little to encourage residence: and much, on the other hand, to make the life of a resident landlord unendurable. Scorned by those who had more freshly arrived from England, and who endeavoured to hold their Irish connection as loosely as possible, the Irish landlord found himself reduced to a level in society that wounded his pride at every turn. He knew that to his exertions, and the exertions of those who went before him, the English tenure of Ireland owed its continuance. Yet no political career was open to him: the offices in his own country went to strangers: he was classed, in an uncalculating and indiscriminating contempt, along with those of an alien and conquered race. Scorned in the society of the English emissaries, he might withdraw to his own estate: but his presence there did little good. He was without education, without any intellectual interest, and he could only strive to cover the wounds inflicted on his pride by a lavish display of coarse and brutal luxury. In a house neglected, dirty, and sordid, he spent his rents in endless carouses, whose only redeeming feature was a half-savage hospitality. His house swarmed with unkempt hangers-on, who might be seen cutting their food from the ox that was roasting whole in the hall, and quenching their thirst from the tankard on their master's table. If any luxuries of furniture were, perchance, admitted, the false pride, which aped what it detested, was

* *List of Absentees*, 2nd ed., p. 27.

sure to prompt their purchase in the English market, and of English manufacture.*

Despised themselves, the landlords repaid their contempt upon the tenants. Thriftless themselves, they provided for their needs by forcing thriftlessness on others. All the thought of the tenant was to contrive means for meeting the recurring fines for renewal, careless how the indebtedness so incurred could be wiped out. Nor could the tenants help themselves. The vast majority were Roman Catholics,† and as such felt themselves to be scarcely within the protection of the law. They were entirely without education, and no other calling than that of an almost barbarous husbandry, was open to them. They were sunk in an abyss of poverty. "The people," we are told,‡ "go bare legged half the year, and rarely touch flesh meat." So wretched was Irish tillage that it was cheaper to import English corn than to use Irish, even with the expense of freight.§ Their own occupation would scarcely have kept the tenants above starvation point, and it was consequently little more than a pretence. As soon as the potatoes were planted, the hut was closed, and the family went forth on the more profitable employment of begging.‖

* It is useless to quote chapter and verse for each of the features of Irish society here depicted. But those who have studied the masses of Irish pamphlets on the questions of the day will recognise them as drawn from the pages of these contemporary records.

† There is scarcely any point on which the evidence is more various than that which bears on the comparative numbers of Protestants and Roman Catholics. Boulter reckons the latter as 5 to 1 (vol i. p. 210): in a MS. letter in the British Museum from Bishop Clayton of Killala to Lady Sundon, I find them reckoned at 8 to 1: whereas in the earlier tract "*On the conduct of the Purse of Ireland*" (1714) they are reckoned to be, in all except northern parts, as 20 to 1. The discrepancy is constant. The author of the *Scheme of the Proportion which the Protestants of Ireland may probably bear to the Papists* reckons the former to be as about 6 to 14.

‡ *List of Absentees*, 2nd ed. p. 32.

§ See Swift's *Proposal for Universal use of Irish manufactures:* and *Considerations for promoting the Agriculture of Ireland*, by R (obert) L (ord) V (iscount) M (olesworth) (1723).

‖ *Essay on the Trade and Improvement of Ireland*, by Arthur Dobbs, Dublin, 1729, 2nd Part.

Idle, lazy, and incorrigible, they wandered from house to house, often extorting a sort of black mail, and thus providing for the needs of winter. So profitable did this become, in the absence of any restraint, or in the apathy which prevented the local magistrates from enforcing the law, that begging became a recognized profession.* Adepts were hired to complete the family group, and these adepts shared the spoils of the season at its close. Girls were debauched in order that they might, as fictitious widows, move compassion, and earn an alms. As the summer drew to a close, they came back, gathered in the potato crop, and then lived during the winter months, an existence little above that of brutes. A class like this soon produced a class even lower and more dangerous than itself. The country was cursed with a brood of hedgers, born of adultery and incest, herding together in troops where the ties of relationship were as completely lost as in a herd of cattle. They were thievish and revengeful, enemies to the industrious, an intolerable burden and plague-spot on the land. But in no other country could they have led a life so free from interference. The English clique at the Castle were too much occupied in checking fancied disaffection, and in dispensing patronage so as to secure support amongst hungry partizans, to care for the welfare of the masses, to whom Whig and Tory were meaningless names. The local gentry, despised by the governing clique, threw off the responsibilities of their position, and allowed matters to drift from bad to worse. The better population of the north, who had still their own energy to save them from despair, left the country in emigrant ships for the West Indies, where they were landed only to lead the life of slaves to those who bound them by chains of debt.†

* Arthur Dobbs computes the number of able-bodied persons thus drawn from labour, as 30,000 annually. *Trade and Improvement of Ireland.*

† See Archbishop Boulter's Letters Vol. I., p. 260. A few years later, in 1736, Bishop Clayton writes from Cork that the North, where the linen industry flourishes, is sending forth emigrants, while the South, whose

To combat such ills Swift stepped from the seclusion in which he had remained since 1714. The history of Ireland had not meanwhile been eventful. But it had been marked by at least two events of some importance—the rise of the dispute as to the finality of the decisions of the Irish House of Lords,* and the passing of the act giving back toleration to the Presbyterians, of which they had been deprived in 1703.

It was in the year 1720, that Swift entered upon this new era of his life. Rarely has it happened to any man to exercise decisive influence in so many widely separated spheres of action. Few could have foreseen that the disheartened politician, the misread satirist, the broken pamphleteer, was yet to appear in two new capacities—enough alone to have won for him a great name—as the Irish patriot, and as the author of the most comprehensive satire that the world has ever seen. Anger first roused him: he saw all the wrongs of Ireland as the work of the Whig government. He felt himself that this was the history of his own impulse. "I do profess without affectation," he writes to Pope a few years later,† "that your kind opinion of me as a patriot, since you call it so, is what I do not deserve; because what I do is owing to perfect rage and resentment, and the mortifying sight of slavery, folly, and baseness about me, among which I am forced to live."

The wrongs of Ireland were undoubtedly deepening. But that which first stirred Swift's pen, was not new. Since the days of Charles II. the Irish had been forbidden to seek a market in England for their cattle. Since the last years of William III. the most iniquitous of a long series of iniquitous laws had crushed out the Irish woollen manufacture by refusing it the liberty of exportation, and by restricting it to the narrow

hempen manufactures a new Act of the English Parliament had destroyed, found no such energy in her people. Sundon MSS., British Museum.

* By the passing, on the 26th of March, 1720, of a Bill for *the Better Securing the Dependency of Ireland on the Crown of Great Britain*, by which the appellate Jurisdiction of the Irish House of Lords was actually taken away.

† *Swift to Pope*, June 1st, 1728.

and precarious market formed by the contraband trade to France. Every year, however, increased the pressure. The exasperation waited only for a voice to utter it.

This was the function now assumed by Swift. The pamphlet which bore the name of "*A Proposal for the Universal use of Irish Manufactures*" was published in 1720. It proposes, in effect, a reprisal on England for her restrictions, by a refusal to use anything that comes thence. A confederation is to be formed, pledged to use nothing that is not of Irish manufacture. Everything, he trusts, will be burned that comes from England, except the people and the coals. This is the basis of the paper: but as it proceeds his indignation waxes warmer. That indignation is preserved, according to one of the most unique secrets of Swift's art, without a trace of the monotonous invective that palls upon the reader. Its power lies in its variety. Indignant earnestness is subtly varied by sarcasm, straight blows of invective by delicate irony. The anger comes out in short, pithy, and telling sentences, which are abruptly closed, and leave a sense of power in reserve. Take for instance, a sentence like this:—

"The Scripture tells us 'that oppression makes a wise man mad:' therefore, consequently speaking, the reason why some men are not mad is that they are not wise. However, it were to be wished that oppression would in time teach a little wisdom to fools."

The paragraph has no close connection with what goes before: and just as little with the ironical complaint that follows, bewailing the wrongs that England suffers because Ireland is audacious enough to use a few of her own products. But we are arrested, as it were, by the concentrated force of these words, simple in themselves, but pregnant with a cynical pity that it would be hard to surpass.

The irony of his description of the sufferings of England from the fact that her tyranny is not quite complete: the contempt poured out upon a slavish adulation of English fashions: the picture of the English nobody who passes for a celebrity in

Ireland *—all these carry us beyond the range of the particular proposal, into a wider region, where human nature is satirized. Swift's proposal was faulty in political economy. Of this the age knew little, and Swift cared nothing for it. He anticipated its maxims only to ridicule them. For him "maxims were controlled" in Ireland; or, as a modern writer might have phrased it, the general truths of political economy had no application. It is the general maladministration of Ireland that is the real object of his attack; and the tyranny of slaves to slaves, that landlords shew, is still more fiercely satirized.

"I know not how it comes to pass (*and yet perhaps I know well enough*), that slaves have a natural disposition to be tyrants: and that when my betters give me a kick, I am apt to revenge it with six upon my footman, although perhaps he may be an honest and diligent fellow."

What follows is rigidly characteristic in its simple force, wasting no word by redundancy, marring the effect by no overwrought effort.

"I have heard great divines affirm, that nothing is so likely to call down a universal judgment from Heaven upon a nation as universal oppression: and whether this be not already verified in part, their worships, the landlords, are now at full leisure to consider. Whoever travels this country, and observes the face of nature, or the faces, and habits, and dwellings of the natives, will hardly think himself in a land where law, religion, or common humanity, is professed."

No government, not swayed by folly as well as injustice, would have accepted the pamphlet as anything else than a fair statement of Irish grievances. To have these grievances stated might, indeed, be a danger, but for this the government themselves were surely responsible. No law was attacked. The

* "Another, who has been for thirty years the common standard of stupidity in England, where he was never heard a minute in any assembly or by any party, with common Christian treatment: yet, upon his arrival here, could put on a face of importance and authority, talk more than six, without either gracefulness, propriety or meaning, and, at the same time, be admired and followed as the pattern of eloquence and wisdom."

irony of the tract accepted the worst of the laws, as facts against which there could be no appeal. That feelings were deeply stirred was due only to the consummate skill with which the case was set forth. But the government were insane enough to place upon the tract precisely the meaning that Swift would have wished, but which their own interest would have bid them ignore. They took it as an attack upon themselves.* The Lord Chief Justice Whiteshed was urged forward: a prosecution against Waters, the printer, was instituted, and the Grand Jury were induced to find a true Bill. But when the trial came on, the jury refused to find a verdict of guilty. Whiteshed bullied, and coaxed, and browbeat them by turns. He laid his hand on his breast and swore that the author's intention was to bring in the Pretender. The jury were stubborn: but at length from very weariness they brought in a special verdict which enabled the proceedings to be prolonged. Whiteshed did not relax his efforts: but they were in vain, and when the Duke of Grafton assumed the functions of Lord Lieutenant in the autumn, he stopped the prosecution by a writ of *nolle prosequi*.

Having thus put his hand anew to the plough, Swift paused. In a letter to Pope, of 10th January, $17\frac{2}{2}\frac{2}{1}$,† he reviews his position: possibly for the sake of his friendship with Pope: more probably perhaps merely as a record of his consistency, for his own satisfaction.‡ He declares his utter ignorance of

* The Government adherents endeavoured without much success to answer the pamphlet. Amongst the tracts belonging to the Royal Irish Academy, I find one reply published in 1720, in which Swift is bitterly attacked for kindling ill feeling between England and Ireland, as he had before done between England and her allies. The writer is orthodoxly humble. "The Protestants of Ireland," he says, "are sensible that nature and circumstances as well as Constitution and original right, have placed them under a dependence on their mother country." Swift is one of the "*labia latrantia*" whose barking keeps off peace.

† The date $17\frac{21}{20}$ given by Scott is erroneous, seeing that the Duke of Grafton's arrival in Dublin as Lord Lieutenant, which took place in August, 1721, is referred to.

‡ Pope declared that he never received the letter: and, if we could trust Po e's word, it seems not im-

the conditions of the political world since his retirement. But, although aloof from the strife of party, he finds himself the object of its bitter abuse. He resents this all the more because, when his favour was at its height, he never sought to do otherwise than save merit from being proscribed on merely political grounds. He had been taunted by his Tory patrons as a Whig: now he is stigmatized as the most rabid of Tory partizans. On the other hand, he wishes to make no court to the new Whig powers: "for the new principles fixed to those of that denomination I did then, and do now, from my heart abhor, detest, and abjure, as wholly degenerate from their predecessors."* He desires only to be suffered "to run quietly among the common herd of people, whose opinions unfortunately differ from those which lead to favour and preferment." Are his opinions so dangerous as to give warrant for the attacks made on him? He has ever been against a Popish successor: he has ever justified the Revolution: he has attached no weight to the mere right of inheritance other than that given it by law and by popular opinion, both of which must yield to political expediency. He has always had a mortal antipathy against standing armies in time of

possible that the letter was written only, and not sent.

* "He means particularly," says Warburton on this passage, "the principle at that time charged upon them by their enemies of an intention to proscribe the Tories." Warburton's assumption is as absolutely without foundation as his assumptions usually are, and the implied charge against Swift of hating the Whigs only because the Whigs were unwilling to receive him into favour, might well be disregarded. But it is more serious to find Mr. Elwin apparently accepting Warburton's interpretation as correct. I can find no warrant for this interpretation either in the words themselves, in the context of the letter, or in the whole tenor of Swift's life. He left the Whigs, as he now says, and as every incident in his life shews, because they developed views to which he could not adhere; because they seemed to impair the privileges of his Church: because their conduct was factious and intolerant. In all this his judgment may have been mistaken: but that is no excuse for the often repeated charge of political inconsistency. That inconsistency has no reality save to those whose continuity of principle is nothing more than servile submission to all the tenets that pass current under a certain party name.

peace.* He has always desired that Parliaments should be annual.† He disliked the monied interest in its opposition to the territorial, which he thought the safer basis for government. He feared the growth of the national debt. He feared still more the encroachments on the liberty of the subject,‡ by which the government, whose excuse was the preservation of liberty, was compelled to defend itself. These were his opinions, "when he was in the world:" if he has any, these are his opinions still: and he wishes only that a political catechism were published once a quarter by authority. Otherwise he may strive to make his court by uttering Whig principles, and find that they have been exploded a month before, and that their utterance proves him only "a disaffected person."

Having thus given an account of his political faith, Swift turned again to his work for Ireland. He touched upon her follies as well as her wrongs. A proposal was now mooted for establishing a national Bank for Ireland. It provoked controversy and jealousy against the monied interest, which was the chief support of the Whig party. Suspicion of stock-jobbers, and of "funds of credit," and knowledge of the evils of the South Sea Company, probably supplied the motives of Swift's opposition to the scheme. Amongst other means of ridiculing it, he wrote a tract proposing to establish "A Swearer's Bank," the profits of which were to consist of fines rigorously exacted for the use of profane language. By much

* It need not be said that Swift spoke in this with the prejudice of his day. But an opinion which has been forgiven to many modern politicians, although maintained against the experience of two centuries, need not surely be much of a reproach to Swift, maintained, as he maintained it, in common with nine-tenths of his contemporaries, and under the natural alarm which an innovation excites.

† This is one of the tenets to which Swift adhered: and his advocacy of it is an early proof of that scheme of parliamentary reform, coupled with a popular basis for monarchical government, by which he and those who sympathized with him, hoped to counteract the tyranny of the Whig oligarchy.

‡ Such as the suspension of *Habeas Corpus* in 1715 and 1716.

casuistry he justifies the project: he gravely meets objections, such as its possible encouragement of swearing. But his contributions to the controversy, in which he chose his side with some rashness, are otherwise of no more than passing interest. His next interference in Irish affairs had issues far more serious. There was at this time, admittedly, a very serious lack of copper coin in Ireland. It was so great as to hamper the small transactions of the poor, and render the payment of weekly or daily wages a matter of difficulty. The lack of coin seems to have dated only a few years back,* and it was caused by the fact that the copper coinage was undervalued in the currency, and had consequently left the country. Its place had been supplied by a host of worthless coins, the private tokens used in payment of wages, and the "raps" which were current amongst the lower peasantry. The want had been duly reported to the English Cabinet: and it was taken up there, not as a real grievance to be met with speedy and scrupulous justice, but as a new opportunity for a job. We only increase the difficulty of understanding what follows, if we seek for too great exactness of information, and expect to find, either in the theories of 1720, a correct estimate of political economy, or in the fierce invectives of partizans, a strict adherence to truth. The patent to make a new copper coinage was granted by the English government to one William Wood, who had some connection with the iron trade, and whose antecedents, it appears, were not very creditable. Naturally, according to the habit of the day, various officials had to levy black mail on the transaction: and the amount of the coinage had to be sufficiently large to enable Wood to recoup himself and make his own profit. It was fixed at £108,000: an amount altogether absurd, according to any estimate, unless the copper coinage was to have more than its proper place in

* Prior, in his "*Observations on Coin in General, with some Proposals for regulating the Value of Coin in Ireland*," (Dublin, 1729), states that twenty years before, the copper coinage had been good and abundant.

the currency of the country.* The greatest share of the plunder was to fall to a lady, whose position was not without sufficient precedent at Court: but in whose case the somewhat blunt moral sense of the time had been stimulated into severity by party feeling. The Duchess of Kendal was to receive £10,000 from Wood. The patent had to pass through various offices, and receive various signatures: at each stage in its progress, and to each signatory, some gratification had doubtless to be paid. Finally, the plunder of Wood—whose claim, or whose hold, upon the government it would be useless to attempt to explain—was to be so large that when the patent was finally recalled the compensation allowed to him was a pension of £3,000 a year for eight years.† These facts are sufficient proof that the groundwork, at least, of a somewhat scandalous job was here.

The patent passed on the 12th of July 1722. As an additional insult to Ireland, it appears to have been passed without any consultation with those responsible for her government, even though the Lord Lieutenant happened to be in London at the time. The full facts could not become known all at once. It was not till more than a year afterwards that the two Houses of the Irish Parliament were so stirred by public feeling as to vary their usual submissiveness by presenting memorials against the patent. Wood published a reply in the *Flying Post* of 8th October, 1723, which was only an aggravation of the original offence. He claimed for the Prerogative

* In a *Scheme of the Money Matters of Ireland*, by John Browne (Dublin, 1729), the total currency is reckoned at £514,000, of which the gold is £500,000, the silver only £10,000, and the copper £4,000. This is exclusive of the paper currency consisting of bankers' notes, reckoned at £400,000. But Browne's authority is not very trustworthy: and the author of a reply to one of his tracts (*Considerations on Seasonable Remarks*) denies that the currency, all included, can exceed £600,000.

† How far this was to cover the sums he had disbursed, including the bribes he had paid, it is impossible to say. It is not likely that any of the money that went to the Duchess of Kendal ever was repaid. The nation had probably to recoup Wood for his useless bribes.

"the power to make the money of what metal, weight, fineness, and denomination the King in his great wisdom shall think fit; to enforce its currency: and to give the profit arising from the coinage to whom he pleaseth." He confesses with astonishing effrontery, that the coinage may not be all the Irish could wish: but do they want to be like starving wretches who will not take food that is not cooked exactly according to their fancy?

So matters went on during the winter, the ill-will gradually swelling. The government began to awake to a sense, not of the injustice, but of the inconvenience that the injustice might bring. In March, 17$\frac{2}{3}\frac{4}{3}$ communications were passing between Lord Carteret, as Secretary of State, and the Duke of Grafton as Lord Lieutenant, in regard to an inquiry: and on the 9th of April, 1724, that inquiry was at length opened before a Committee of Privy Council at the Cockpit, Whitehall. The memorials from both Houses, had been followed by addresses from Corporations, from Quarter Sessions, from Trades Guilds. But some more articulate, more definite, and more independent mouthpiece for the common indignation, was wanted. Then, and then only, was it that Swift stept in. The indignation had already risen to boiling pitch: he gave it voice, but it is not to be supposed that he created the universal force of feeling which soon animated all Irishmen, merely by a skilful exaggeration of a fictitious grievance.

Swift's first pamphlet, published while the Committee of Inquiry was sitting in London, took the form of a letter written in the character of M. B. Drapier, directly to the Irish people. It was, so the title page declared, "Very proper to be kept in every family": and, to promote its circulation, the author says he had "ordered the printer to sell it at the lowest rate.* The

* The price was twopence: and both printing and paper are of the very poorest. There is a tradition at Delville that the vault now to be found underneath the summer-house which was adorned with Stella's portrait, was used for the purpose of clandestine printing: and the tradition was con-

letter shews all the art that enabled Swift to sway at will the passions of men. In describing the patent, he uses the same sort of exaggeration that had been found in the memorials of the Irish Parliament. "If you beat down twelve English pence," he tells the Irish, "and carry the copper to the brazier, he will give you the nominal value, with but one penny of abatement. Do the same with Wood's halfpence, and you will get no more than a penny for your twelve pence." It is absurd to suppose either that this was true, or that Swift thought that it was true. His object was simply to put a scandalous transaction in the grossest aspect possible. Just as absurd are some of the pictures that he draws—of purchasers who will have to pay their debts in cartloads of Wood's trash, of two hundred and fifty horses that will be required to bring up to Dublin the half-yearly rental of Squire Conolly.* Swift wished to drag a political scandal to light; he chose to picture as immediate realities what were only to be conceived as remotely possible results. The device was one of the ordinary and recognised methods of political controversy then: later ages may judge whether it has since been discarded.

But apart from exaggeration, there was enough of real injustice in the matter. In the reign of James II.—no very severe comparison—a patent for copper coinage was granted, allowing thirty-two pence to be coined from each pound of copper, which was then intrinsically worth 18*d*. Wood's patent allowed thirty pence out of each pound, the pound being in 1723, intrinsically worth 12*d*. only. This was bad enough: but there was no guarantee that the coin should even

firmed by the finding of some type there, about forty years ago. But the story rests on no very sure foundation; and it seems to imply an unnecessary caution, seeing that the publication of the letters was perfectly open.

* The mention of Conolly's name is not accidental. Conolly was Speaker of the House of Commons: was a close adherent of the government: and had directed the action of the Duke of Grafton, then Lord Lieutenant, when he was openly thwarted by Viscount Midleton, the Chancellor, whose advice he refused to follow, and who opposed the patent.

reach the prescribed value. As a fact there were several varieties of Wood's coinage. Assays were of little value, especially as the Comptroller was to be paid by Wood himself. More than this, there was no real limit of the quantity issued. In previous patents, a clause had been inserted compelling the patentee to exchange his copper for its nominal value in the currency. Previous patents had, indeed, been little more than extensions of the custom common during the seventeenth century in Ireland, of private coinages. Wood's patent was not so limited: the moment the coinage passed from his hands, he had no further concern in it. With a silver coinage so scarce as it now was, it was easy to set afloat the copper coinage: it might be trusted, in the mass of heterogeneous coins, to tell few tales.

But even in the first letter, Swift enlarges the question from the details of the coinage. The halfpence are bad: but how, he asks, has this come about? He answers his own question: "because you in Ireland are far from the ear of the King, and cannot mislead him like Wood and his friends." "You must suffer unheard: your good coin will leave you, and you will be compelled to barter your goods against this dross." With a boldness of inconsistency that few but Swift could have ventured, he turns round to the cottar's point of view. The shopkeeper has been warned how his goods will go: now the cottar is warned that, with this dross as his only coin, he will find that he can buy nothing from the shopkeeper. "Do you fancy that we will part with our goods for a coinage that might well be made of old kettles or pebbles?"

All classes will be wronged: and the wrong will be suffered because we are so helpless. What then is to be done? The answer is easy. Refuse this trash. Let it be the accursed thing in Israel. Have no fear of the royal prerogative: a prerogative strained is a thing which is not: and to give it heed is but dishonouring the King. You are bound to take gold and silver: but it is at your option to take copper. It is

at your peril, as sane men, that you will take this trash. The nation as one man, must bind itself to refuse: even the peasant should rather cling to his "raps" than accept this badge of slavery and starve.

The Report of the Committee of Inquiry was dated the 24th of July, 1724. It is singularly inconclusive in its defence of the patent. It compares the patents of former days: and urges as a justification for this, that whereas former patentees had paid £16 a year to the Crown and Comptroller, Wood, that is to say the Irish people, was to pay £1000. The assay is adduced as proving the soundness of the coin: but the only coins assayed were those coined after Lady-day, 1723, whereas all in circulation were coined before that date.* Irish officials, it is admitted, were not consulted: but there was no reason, it is asserted, why they should be. The main ground of accusation, in the flagrant disregard of Irish interests, and of Irish views, is absolutely ignored. And yet this elaborate defence ends with the recommendation that this beneficial and necessary coinage should be limited to £40,000.

Before the report of the Committee was published, a forecast of it and of the action of the Government was published in a London paper, and repeated in Harding's Newspaper, in Dublin, on the 1st of August, 1724. The paragraph may have been meant as an assistance by a clumsy friend, or it may have been the attack of a more skilful enemy, of Wood. Wood, it was asserted, was willing to take goods for his coin, if silver were not forthcoming: he would restrict the amount to $5\frac{1}{2}d.$ in each payment, and it was hinted that unreasonable obstinacy might be met by exercise of the prerogative.

Swift had here just what he desired. The Drapier's Second Letter is addressed on the 4th of August, 1724, to Harding, the printer, on the occasion of the paragraph. The merits and details of the question, are now laid aside. Even Wood is

* Mr. Southwell, one of the Assayers, told Archbishop King that the orders were strict which limited the inquiry to the later date.

almost forgotten in the vehemence of rage that a nation should be exposed to the menaces or to the mercy of such as he. He will restrict, forsooth! So that our boasted freedom is held by the grace of Wood! And there is talk of a proclamation! If it comes, every honest citizen is bound to ignore what will be no more than a fiction based on error. Once for all, resist: or waste no labour, but accept your inevitable yoke of slavery.

The Second Letter prepared men's minds for the Report. That Report reached Dublin when the letter had suggested the indignation which Swift meant that the Report should kindle, and the third letter, of 25th August, fell on ground well prepared. This time the "Nobility and Gentry of Ireland" were addressed: and the tone adopted was very different from that of the previous papers. The purpose of Swift in this letter is no longer to argue against a scheme which is universally condemned. With a grave irony, he shews the utter absurdity of the position. Is it true that the profit of an obscure mechanic is to be preferred "not only before the interests, but the very safety and being of a great Kingdom, and a Kingdom distinguished for its loyalty, perhaps above all others upon Earth?"

"Are not," he asks, "the people of Ireland born as free as those of England? How have they forfeited their freedom? Is not their Parliament as fair a representative of the people as that of England? And has not their Privy Council as great, or a greater share in the administration of public affairs? Are not they subjects of the same king? Does not the same sun shine upon them? And have they not the same God for their protector? Am I a freeman in England and do I become a slave in six hours by crossing the Channel?"

The lies of the witnesses, the dishonesty of the patentee, the rottenness of the coinage—all these are cast aside, as if they were proved and needed no more said of them. The independence of Ireland is what he insists on: and the duty resting upon the men of leading in her midst, to assert that indepen-

dence. The king has granted the patent. He cannot, it seems, withdraw it. "Well then, it rests with us to consult his dignity by doing for him what he cannot do for himself, and accordingly to refuse every farthing of this worthless dross. The well-being of Ireland clearly points to one course: it is for you to lead on it."

Swift probably guessed when he wrote this letter with its tone of suppressed indignation, that it assumed an independence of spirit which did not really exist. It was skilfully drawn so as to prepare men for a new appeal, and was far from a last word. For two months he waited: and on the 13th of October, 1724, the fourth and far the greatest of the Letters appeared. It was addressed "To the whole People of Ireland." Again it casts aside the lesser controversy as to the coinage and its conditions. Ireland is summoned to assert her independence, no longer as a decent and reasonable interpretation of her relations to England, but with the indignant voice of a nation that has borne her yoke of slavery to a degraded tyrant, far too long. She is to wrench her freedom from the crumbling and mouldy corruption of English misrule. There is not a line of the whole letter that is not instinct with life, and thrilling with sarcastic force. The flimsy technicalities of debate are torn to pieces. The phrase "depending kingdom," which, as applied to Ireland, had been made to justify any stretch of power, is "but a modern term of art:" were it ten times true, it would be inapplicable here.

"Let who ever thinks otherwise,* I, M. B. Drapier, desire to be excepted: for I declare next under God, I depend only on the King my sovereign, and on the laws of my own country. And I am so far from depending upon the people of England, that if they should ever rebel against my sovereign (which God forbid!) I would be ready, at the first command from his Majesty, to take up arms against them, as some of my countrymen did

* Expressions as faulty in point of grammar as this are not rare in Swift's prose, the strength of which lies in its clearness and flexibility rather than in technical correctness: but in the Drapier's letter, flaws had of course a special appropriateness which they had not elsewhere.

against theirs at Preston. And if such a rebellion should prove so successful as to fix the Pretender on the throne of England, I would venture to transgress that Statute so far, as to lose every drop of my blood to hinder him from being King of Ireland."*

He is sick to death of the cant that one English governor has repeated after another. We are to be told, eternally, "to think of some good bills for encouraging of trade, and setting the poor to work; some further Acts against Popery, and for uniting Protestants." We all know the mixture of wheedling, flattery, and solemn promises, that would follow. But you can corrupt us no longer: you have wasted the wherewithal to bribe. You can betray us no longer: we must betray ourselves, if we be longer slaves. "But God be thanked, the best of them are only our fellow subjects, and not our masters." Are we in Ireland to be the victims of a strained prerogative, long forgotten in England? Are we to be at the mercy of men ignorant of our wants, who "look upon us as a sort of savage Irish, whom our ancestors conquered several hundred years ago?" We need waste no words. The question is simply one of might against right, a question as old as human nature, but never brought into shorter compass. "The arguments on both sides are invincible: for, in reason, all Government without the consent of the governed is the very definition of slavery: but, in fact, eleven men well armed will certainly subdue one single man in his shirt." Force us then if you can: but so long as we have the power, we shall be free. We will take your

* The manœuvre by which Swift managed to associate a suspicion of Jacobitism with his opponents, is one peculiarly characteristic: and so is the skill with which, in the next letter, he meets the objections to this paragraph, by half offering an extent of submission that might equally be embarrassing—a submission even to Jacobitism, if Jacobitism were to become strong enough. He does not commit himself, however: he fears a "spiteful interpretation." In short, he places the English Cabinet on the horns of a dilemma. "Am I to resist Jacobitism? Then what becomes of your doctrine of Ireland's dependency?" or, "Am I to become a Jacobite, if England bids me? Then, what becomes of your Protestant succession? Must even that give way to your desire to tyrannize?"

coin, when, as your patentee threatens, it is melted down, and poured into our throats: but not till then.

If the English Government found in this letter a note of open defiance, they had themselves to blame. Their scheme, whether in its first suggestion good or bad for Ireland, had been carried out in a way to outrage all the decencies of government. Swift had at first poured his sarcasm on Wood: and the dangerous questions in the background might have been avoided by abandoning the scheme. Even after the report was issued, he had ascribed its mistakes to Wood and his accomplices. The Government had remained obstinate: and now they found themselves confronted by open defiance all along the line. Unable to retrace their steps, they saw no way open to them but prosecution.

A proclamation was accordingly issued.* Harding, the printer of the letter, was thrown into prison, as if to shame the undoubted author into surrender. Ireland was now under a new rule. The Duke of Grafton, honest and well-intentioned, but proud and dull, had failed to solve the difficulty, and had indeed been little trusted by the English Cabinet.† He had been thwarted at every turn by Viscount Midleton, who had sought to provide for his popularity in Ireland, by opposing the coinage, although he had been careful to keep on good terms with Walpole. The Duke was now recalled, and in his place, Lord Carteret was sent from the Secretaryship of State, into what was to him little less than banishment. He was sent to manage a difficulty which he had perhaps done something to foment. Whatever his faults, he was at least free from those of Grafton. If Grafton failed from dulness and timidity, it was his brilliant recklessness that prevented Carteret from reaching the highest pinnacle of success. He was versatile beyond all men of his day: and his versatility

* See Appendix VII.

† "A fair-weather pilot, that knew not what he had to do, when the first storm arose," are the words in which Walpole describes him.

bewildered duller men. He had a breadth of scholarly and literary sympathy that forbade his absorption in the sphere of politics, and those for whom that sphere was everything, looked askance on his aberrations. He had a keenness of insight that detected tricks and corruption wherever they prevailed: but he met them chiefly with the sneer of the cynic. He refused to believe a Tory to be necessarily a traitor, and conceived an administration possible, which should strengthen itself by alliances amongst all moderate men, and not confine itself to those who bound themselves by party ties founded as much on accident as reason. His talents enabled him to dispense with labour: his recklessness led him to despise it. Even when carrying out the behests of his own party, he refused to shut his eyes to their abuse of power, and neglected the maxims of orthodox Whiggism in the distribution of his patronage. Such had been his administration, hitherto, in England: and, as such, in Ireland it gained him the regard of Swift, the suspicion of Walpole. The vice-royalty of Carteret became an epoch in the life of Swift.

When Carteret had been nominated as Lord-Lieutenant in April, 1724, Swift had used the privilege of an old friend to write to him very freely on the subject of the coinage. Such a letter would in itself dispel the notion that Swift's only object was to find an excuse for a partizan attack upon the Government. For a month he awaited a reply: and then addressed Lord Carteret in a second letter, which is a masterpiece in its kind. "I have been long out of the world," he writes, "but have not forgotten what used to pass among those I lived with while I was in it: and I can say that during the experience of many years, and many changes in affairs, your excellency, and one more,* who is not worthy to be compared to you, are the only great persons that ever refused to answer

* This may have been the Duke of Chandos, though the Dean's principal complaint against that nobleman belonged to a later date. (See Scott's Swift, XVIII., 224.)

a letter from me, without regard to business, party, or greatness: and if I had not a peculiar esteem for your personal qualities, I should think myself to be acting a very inferior part, in making this complaint."

Fortunately for both, Lord Carteret did not seek to pursue the quarrel. He wrote in terms that more than soothed the ruffled feelings of Swift: and their friendly relations were renewed before Carteret's actual administration of Ireland began.*

Enraged at the proclamation, Swift met Carteret, soon after his arrival,† with angry expostulations. Carteret excused himself by the Virgilian quotation—

> Res dura, et regni novitas, me talia cogunt
> Moliri.

On this or some such occasion, it may have been that Swift replied by the not uncomplimentary outburst, "What in God's name, do *you* here? Get you gone, and send us our boobies again."

The proclamation was issued on the 27th of October; and Swift took a bold method of meeting it. This was a letter‡ addressed to Lord Midleton, the Lord Chancellor, defending the Drapier, and almost acknowledging himself the author of

* The relations between the two were those of sympathy, interrupted only by the occasional jars which circumstances forced on, and in which each learned to respect the other's wit. On one occasion Swift was kept waiting for an audience, and is said to have written on the window of the waiting-room, the lines

> My very good lord, 'tis a very hard task,
> For a man to wait here, who has nothing to ask,

under which Carteret wrote the reply,

> My very good dean, there are few who come here,
> But have something to ask, or something to fear.

† October 22nd.

‡ This letter Scott prints out of the proper order, as the sixth letter. He heads the letter, which in his edition professes to be printed from the Dublin edition of 1735, "Deanery House, Oct., 1724." The Dublin edition however dates it, at the end, "Deanery House, Oct. 26, 1724." Swift may have known of the proclamation a day or two before its formal issue: or he may either in error, or with some purpose, have dated the letter a day or two before it was written.

the letters. That the letter was actually sent there seems no reason to doubt, although it was not printed till more than ten years had passed. The fitness of its destination is clear. Midleton, although a Whig, had not concealed his dislike to the coinage. His office had however compelled him to be the first signatory to the Proclamation. For years Swift and he had stood aloof: but now a common sympathy had brought them together, even though Midleton's official duties made him the direct agent of the oppression he disliked.

In this letter Swift takes up two accusations against the Drapier. He had estranged, so it was said, the Irish and the English nations from one another: and he had spoken injuriously of the Royal Prerogative. The first he dismisses briefly. He fears that the estrangement had a foundation other than the Drapier's words. Ignorance, disregard, contempt—these were the only means by which, hitherto, England had sought to bind Ireland to herself.

"As to Ireland, they know little more of it than they do of Mexico; farther than that it is a country subject to the King of England, full of bogs, inhabited by wild Irish papists, who are kept in awe by mercenary troops sent from thence: and their general opinion is, that it were better for England if the whole island were sunk into the sea. * * I have seen the grossest suppositions passed upon them; that the wild Irish were taken in toils: but that in some time they would grow so tame as to eat out of your hands."*

* That this was not a mere rhetorical exaggeration of the Englishman's belief, is shown by the following passage from Burdy's Life of Skelton. (Works I., LXIII.) "When he was in London, there was a man from the parish of Derriaghy, he assured us, that passed there for a wild Irishman, and was exhibited as a public show, dressed up with a false beard, artificial wings, and the like. Hundreds from all parts flocked to see a strange spectacle, which they had often heard of before: and among others, a Derriaghy man, who happened to be in London, came in the crowd, and saw the wild Irishman, a hideous figure, with a chain about him, cutting his capers before a gaping multitude. Yet notwithstanding his disguise, he soon discovered, that this wild Irishman was a neighbour's son, a sober civilised young man, who had left Derriaghy a little before him. When the show was finished, he went behind the scene, and cried out so as to be heard by his countryman, 'Derriaghy, Derriaghy.' Upon this the seeming

As for the prerogative, he is at a loss to see what crime the Drapier has committed. He will submit to be silent, if forced to be: but he will still "go and whisper among the reeds, not any reflection upon the wisdom of my countrymen, but only these few words, BEWARE OF WOOD'S HALFPENCE."*

The bill against Harding came before the Grand Jury early in the Michaelmas term. By a letter of "Seasonable Advice," on the 11th of November the Drapier warned them of what was expected of them. "Shall *Jonathan* die," ran the Scriptural quotation, now in every one's mouth, "who has wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground: for he hath wrought with God this day." Whiteshed, the Chief Justice, again attempted, as he had in Waters's case, to browbeat the jury. But it was in vain. The bill was thrown out: and Whiteshed could only show his resentment by the questionable means of dissolving the Grand Jury. Another Grand Jury was formed: but its elements were the same. The vindication of the Drapier was not enough: the war was carried into the enemy's camp by a presentment against the halfpence. The City of Dublin was now fully roused. Authority was scouted: the agencies of the law had been made ridiculous by Whiteshed's impotent attempt to override the rules and customs of his office. It remained for Swift to follow up his triumph.

wild Irishman, staring with surprise, spoke aloud, 'I'll go any place for Derriaghy.' They had then a private meeting when he told him, that being destitute of money, he took that method of gulling the English, and succeeded far beyond his expectations."

* The stories repeated by Scott, of Swift's fear of detection by his servant, Blakeley, and of his having visited Harding in prison in the disguise of a clown, are foolish inventions. Swift was absolutely secure against detection, for the best of all reasons, that there was nothing to detect. His authorship of the Drapier's letters was notorious: and it is curious that Scott should have repeated stories like these, while on pages immediately following, he gives abundant evidence that the Dean was recognised as the Drapier by every street boy in Dublin. The question was only one of legal proof. Archbishop King all but told Lord Carteret that Swift was the author, and hinted that he was about formally to announce it.

He could afford to assume an apologetic tone: he had no longer to create an impression, but to confirm one created. The mob was on his side. The addresses of more august assemblies were now supplemented by those of the sworn associations of butchers and brewers, by the "Flying stationers" or newsboys, and by the Black Guard. At every street corner broad-sheets and ballads in his honour, were sold. Every tavern had its club to celebrate the Drapier, and every convivial meeting rang with choruses in his honour. Some of the doggrel that was written in contempt of Wood, and in honour of the Patriot Drapier, was sorry enough. But other writings than those avowed by the Drapier, either came from his hand, or passed under his revision. At the most critical juncture, lines of his own were addressed to the people, urging resistance to the tyranny closing in upon them, and concluding thus:—

> If yet to virtue you have some pretence,
> If yet ye are not lost to common sense,
> Assist your patriot in your own defence.
> That stupid cant, "he went too far," despise,
> And know that to be brave is to be wise:
> Think how he struggled for your liberty,
> And give him freedom, whilst yourselves are free.

His friend Sheridan came to his assistance with a piece called "Tom Punsibi's dream," which represented the sufferings of Ireland from her more powerful neighbour, and hinted in no very obscure way at the parts played by the Duchess of Kendal and Walpole, in the affair of Wood. Other pieces held up Whiteshed to ridicule with such success that the vexation is said to have shortened his life.

It was in this full tide of triumph, that Swift published, on the 14th of December, 1724, his fifth letter, addressed to Viscount Molesworth,* closing the series for the present. Its tone is one of humble apology. "He is aware of his gross

* Lord Molesworth was one of those whose Whig connexions did not prevent his sympathy with the Drapier.

presumption in attempting to vindicate liberty with weapons so poor as he has at command. He must have been misled by trusting to the bad guidance of authors who fancied that the monarchy, either of England or of Ireland, was not quite a tyranny. But he is so deplorably ignorant, that he cannot even now withdraw the points found fault with." He is like "the dumb boy whose tongue found a passage for speech by the horror of seeing a dagger at his father's throat." "This," he goes on, "may lessen the wonder that a Tradesman, hid in privacy and silence, should cry out when the life and being of his political mother are attempted before his face, and by so infamous a hand." He can only promise that for the future he will bury at the bottom of his chest all the writings that treat of liberty: will never presume while in Ireland to bring them to the light of day: and will never forget the "climate I am in." Hitherto he has not shaken off the impression left by the works of Lord Molesworth himself, of Locke, and Molyneux, and Sidney, who talked of liberty as a common blessing. But now he will "grow wiser, and learn to consider my driver, the road I am in, and with whom I am yoked."

The Ministry were compelled to yield. As the controversy was closing for Swift, new pamphlets from his imitators continued to come forth. The description of the supposed execution of Wood was given, with his dying speech upon the scaffold. Dreary jokes were played upon his name, and the street cries on the subject were repeated in pamphlets to suit the taste of the day.* Others took up a more dangerous line, and improved the triumph over the government in the interests

* Scott has published (vol. VII.) several pamphlets, which cannot be considered authentic and which present no intrinsic evidence of Swift's authorship. They not only repeat his arguments, and travel over ground which he had covered, but they are without any of his wit or humour. Of those printed from p. 58 to p. 92, some are certainly not by Swift, including the "Short Defence" (p. 58), "The true State of the Case" (p. 64), the "Letter to Wood from his only Friend in Ireland" (p. 73), and the "Letter to Wood from a Quaker." Others are doubtful.

of the Jacobites. "Honest" Shippen, the doughty champion of the cause, seems to have brought forward the affair of Wood in the English Parliament as a means of stirring ill-will against the government of Walpole. It was a use of his victory that Swift would scarcely have encouraged. He strove to make it yield other fruit: and for at least ten years after the end of the Drapier's fight, he stood foremost amongst those whose advice and whose labour were spent in striving to right the wrongs which weighed down Ireland from within and from without. The beginning of his work in this direction may be said to date from the Drapier's so-called seventh letter,* which although written about this time, did not appear till 1735. It is much more a start on a new course, than a continuation of the past struggle.

Swift's future place and work in Ireland, belong, however, to another chapter. At present it is well to look to the state of English administration there, as it was shaped by the struggle just ended.

The fierceness of the attack on his administration, led by Swift, had made Walpole resolve on a new course in Irish politics. The attack had been on two points in which he was most vitally concerned. One of these was the chief excellence, the other was the chief defect of his administration. There was nothing in which his administration was more able than its finance: there was nothing by which it was more deeply stained than its corruption. Swift's onslaught attacked a point of pride, because it decried a scheme which was connected with finance. It attacked a point of disgrace, because it exposed the corruption which entwined itself with the whole system of which Walpole was the head. Walpole disliked the exposure, but perhaps still more the financial defeat; and the dislike prompted his new scheme for the government of Ireland. It was a novel version of the system of "thorough"

* It forms the seventh in the series, only if we reckon the letter written from the Deanery House, and not in the character of the Drapier, as sixth.

familiarly associated with the names of Strafford and of Laud.

Walpole's plan was soon laid. Lord Carteret, as Lord Lieutenant, was to be the governor of Ireland only in name. Some patronage might be exercised by him, though under the eye of criticism. The direction of the immediate steps to be taken, might be in his hands, though in obedience to the dictates of general policy from England. The settlement of matters calling for the exercise of delicate tact on the spot, might be left to him. But another influence was to be stronger. Carteret had really been dismissed from the Secretaryship of State, and Walpole had found in his appointment as Lord Lieutenant at once a refined revenge for Carteret's opposition, and a satisfactory means of providing for Irish government.

Soon after Lord Carteret's appointment another vacancy occurred, that of the Primacy and the Archbishopric of Armagh. It had been held by Lindsay, who was appointed through Swift's influence, shortly before the death of the Queen. He had brought to the office a rigid Toryism that was suspected even of a Jacobite stain. His successor was a man of another cast. This was Dr. Hugh Boulter, before Bishop of Bristol and Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, who for nineteen years to come, is one of the most prominent figures in Irish history.

He was a man of undoubted vigour, and of admirable business powers. No detail escaped him. His vigilance was incessant. He noted every symptom of failing health in the holder of any office, whether high or low, and was ready betimes to recommend to his masters in England some scheme for changing, settling, re-arranging all the placemen concerned, so as to lie more ready to his hand. He was in no way confined to the affairs natural to his calling, but subordinated these to political considerations, with absolute callousness. He had a keen eye for what was expedient in matters of finance, or trade, or law. More than this, we are bound to

admit that he was a faithful, even a pertinacious, friend. If he took a man under his care, he never tired till he got him settled in some post. He never fretted when his favourites were repulsed: but quietly returned to the charge. He was without spiteful remembrance or ill-will. When anyone who had opposed him yielded—and not a few did so yield—he was ready to receive him into favour, and to bury all grudges. Finally, he had no ignobly selfish ends. For nearly nineteen years, he held the garrison in Ireland: and during that time he amassed no private fortune, and compassed no material advantage for himself.

On the other hand, when we look at him as governor of Ireland, his whole attitude appears that of one who mocked at real justice. From first to last, through the correspondence in which for fourteen years he sets forth, with striking perspicacity, his views on Irish politics for the benefit of his masters at St. James's, there is but one tone with respect to the country he is set to govern. He came without one grain of Irish sympathy, and he never obtained or sought to obtain it. To him, an Englishman who had struck root in Irish soil was on the same footing with an Irishman, who by race, language, and religion, was an alien. "The English Party;" "the English interest;" "the friends of England,"—these words are ever recurring: nothing is to be done for the good of Ireland till it be shewn that the good of England is concerned the same way. If Ireland is to be prosperous, it is only because Ireland prosperous is a benefit to England.

He recognises perfectly what his own position is. "Many of our own original," he confesses at the outset, "esteem us Englishmen as intruders." He early discerns how widely spread is the notion of "the independency of this kingdom." He has few around him whom he can trust, and has to struggle almost single-handed. It was a bold though not a very noble struggle. It would not do to be too severe at first: and with some tact he has to urge that, good as the coinage was, it

might, on the whole, wisely be withdrawn. When the withdrawal came, he had to help in giving dignity to the retreat; and it was with some difficulty that he obtained a vote, thanking the King,—not for the "*wisdom*" of the act, as the Opposition were desirous of having it, so as to express their sense of the foolishness of the original design,—but, in more courtly terms, for his "*condescension*."

This first difficulty got over, the policy he advocated was that of increasing, at all hazards, the English interest. "All the great places must be filled with Englishmen, if we are to have quiet here." Over and over again this is the theme he urges. Even dissent has at times to be encouraged, in order to prevent Irish churchmen from waxing independent.

Set to govern Ireland, Boulter had clearness of vision enough to see that the task would be easier if Ireland were more prosperous. To accomplish this, he set himself, with the dogged determination of a man who has a work to do, not with the ardour of a reformer. He is instrumental in getting an Act passed enforcing the tillage of five acres out of every hundred.* He strives to meet the distress caused by three successive bad harvests (1726, 1727, 1728), by charitable distribution of bread and corn. He sees in the increasing emigration of many of the most industrious classes of Ireland not only a danger to the English interest, but a source of misery to those who, under false expectations, were carried as slaves to the American plantations; and, other means failing, he would fain stop it by the high hand of force. To counteract the spread at once of pauperism and of Roman Catholicism, he labours hard to strengthen the chartered schools, which sought to meet the difficulties by tearing asunder the natural bonds of the family, and dividing children from their parents. He was sincere so far as he went: but he handled even matters meant to benefit Ireland only from an English point of view. When a Bill essentially affecting the well-being of an Irish manu-

* *Letters*, Vol. I. p. 221.

facture is rejected by the English Council, he finds matter for thanks to the English Ministers in the fact "that the rejection was not based *solely* on disregard for Ireland, but *also to some extent* on the notion that rejection would benefit England!"* And this he writes with no thought of sarcasm.

Such was the man who, during the whole of Swift's remaining years of activity, and through the viceroyalty of three governors, virtually ruled Ireland. It was exactly the sort of rule—narrow, obstinate, blind to all merit but submission—which most irritated a man like Swift. But it was wise in its day and generation. Each year confirmed Boulter's hold. "For five years," he can write in 1729, "the Government has been in English hands." He gained his ends: and even when a new proposal was broached in reference to the coinage, in opposition to which Swift took a strong part, Boulter carried the day against the Drapier, and Swift could only shew his indignation by hanging out a black flag from his Cathedral for the benefit of the Kevin Bail!†

* *Letters*, Vol. II. p. 62.

† *Letters*, Vol. II. p. 246. The Kevin Bail was the name given to the mob of Swift's Liberty of St. Patrick's. The name survives in Kevin Street.

CHAPTER XIV.

SWIFT AGAIN AMONG THE WITS. GULLIVER'S TRAVELS.

1725—1727.

ÆTAT. 57—59.

Swift's attractions to England—Invitations from Bolingbroke, Gay, and Pope—The occupations of his friends—His visit in 1726—Bolingbroke in later life—Arbuthnot—Pope—Gay—Atterbury and his banishment—Bathurst—Congreve—Peterborough—Swift and the Temple family—His reception by his friends—Dawley and Twickenham—Leicester House—Illness of Esther Johnson—Swift's anxiety—The recovery—Swift and Walpole—The Story of their dealings—Hopes of conciliation dispelled—Return to barbarism—Swift's reception in Dublin—*Gulliver's Travels*—The stratagem about the manuscript—Conditions under which the book was written—Its motives—Comparison of the different parts—Swift back in England (1727)—Bathurst—Pulteney—Voltaire—Swift as ally of the Opposition—The death of George I.—Walpole's power maintained—Swift's anxieties for Esther Johnson—Her relapse—Back to his "lair"—The *Journal* at Holyhead—Swift in solitude—His last sight of England.

Even during the early years of his residence in Ireland, Swift had ever turned fondly to his associations in England: and as the fierceness of the Drapier struggle was wearing off, these associations were claiming a stronger hold upon him. His correspondence with one or other of the circle had never entirely ceased: and, during the recent years, that circle had come together again, had acquired additional strength in their literary position, and were not without hope of political influence as well. They were now beginning to look forward to Swift's rejoining them: and he had himself never abandoned the hope of being back amongst those friends with whom the most brilliant period of his life had been spent. During his years of retirement, he had been occupied on a work for which

due appreciation would be found only in that circle, and the plan of which he had already imparted to some of them. As time goes on the correspondence increases: Swift looks forward to another visit to England: even though he feels that there is something in himself which may make the renewal of these old associations less pleasant. He knows how moods that he would fain check are asserting their power over him. He dwells over, perhaps exaggerates, these moods, with something of a morbid severity of self-judgment. The reaction after the years of excitement in England, and the comparatively slight interest which he could take in the scenes around him now, even when they yielded to him the excitement of the fray, had produced an increased inclination to dwell on trifles, to avoid exertion, to seek for the paltry pleasure of worthless flattery. "Nothing has convinced me so much," he writes to Bolingbroke,* before he had dipped actively into Irish politics, "that I am of a little subaltern spirit, *inopis atque pusilli animi*, as to reflect how I am forced into the most trifling friendships, to divert the vexation of former thoughts, and present objects." After he had begun his struggle for Irish independence, and was outwardly defying the government, this mood was exchanged for one equally morbid, and strangely in contrast with the bold attitude which Swift maintained to the world. "I, who am sunk under the prejudices of another education," so he writes to Pope,† "and am every day persuading myself that a dagger is at my throat, a halter about my neck, or chains about my feet, all prepared by those in power, can never arrive at the serenity of mind you possess." He felt the encroachments of that undue occupation about money, which his friends also remarked, but which was much more the effect of an exaggerated rigidity of self-discipline, than the product of avarice in the ordinary sense. He himself did not judge it tenderly. He confessed it nakedly to Bolingbroke: and received in return an edifying lecture on the subject from that spendthrift philosopher and

* Dec. 19, 1719. † Sept. 20, 1723.

rakish moraliser.* His perception of these infirmities perhaps held him back for a time from the visit. But the attraction is too strong to be resisted. Everything calls him to England: "there" he says, "I made my friendships, there I left my desires."† In Ireland, "he had distributed his friendships in pennyworths to those about him that displeased him least:" but he had never ceased to consider it as a place of banishment, and the feeling did not diminish, or wear off, with time.

Bolingbroke urged, as early as July, 1721, that Swift should come to him in France; and the invitation of Bolingbroke was followed before long by invitations from others of the old circle. At the close of 1722, Gay renewed a correspondence long interrupted,‡ and impressed on Swift how his presence was desired. The letter stirred some feelings that Swift had perhaps tried to quell. "This humdrum way of life," he says, "would be passable enough, if you would let me alone." He is almost angry at the disturbance, which it will take him three months to get rid of, and to school himself again into apathetic dulness. But in 1723, the invitations become more persistent. His friends will take no refusal. In June of that year, Bolingbroke returned from exile, to fill a position even more prominent in the circle than that vacated by Bishop Atterbury, whose banishment began at the same time that Bolingbroke's ceased.§ Gay and Pope are occupied with new literary schemes, on which they seek Swift's advice. His old friends have again gathered round London, and if the hopes of snatching power from the hands of Walpole were not very great, at least the danger of molestation in their own pursuits was past. Before

* *Bolingbroke to Swift*, July 28, 1721.

† *Swift to Gay*, Jan. 8, $17\frac{23}{24}$.

‡ *Gay to Swift*, Dec. 22, 1722.

§ According to Atterbury's belief, Bolingbroke and he "were exchanged." The opinion was one he continued to entertain: but, although Mr. Elwin is disposed to think that it might not be entirely without grounds, there seems scarcely to be such evidence as would warrant us either in fixing a new stain on Bolingbroke's character, or attributing to the English Government a singularly objectless and foolish bargain.

Lord Oxford died, he seems to have been considered as the centre of considerable political influence.* His death came in May, 1724. By his son, the father's invitation to Swift was renewed: and Swift can only answer that the scene in England might be sadly changed, and that the subsequent return to Ireland would be still more hard.† But in spite of hesitation the visit draws nearer. "You are getting into our vortex," Pope tells him: and each of the circle paints, after his own fashion, the new scene that will meet Swift. "So much of the old world and the old man in each of us has been altered that scarce a single thought of the one, any more than a single atom of the other, remains just the same"—so says Pope. "They are to meet together as mariners after a storm"—says Arbuthnot. At length, at the close of 1725, Swift made up his mind to the voyage; and in March $17\frac{2}{2}\frac{6}{5}$ he set out for London after an absence of twelve years.

Of that company, into the midst of whom Swift now returned, the most conspicuous member, Bolingbroke, was already aspiring, as the prospects of office became more dim, to fill that place, described in his epitaph as "something more and better."‡ He never was more assiduous in cultivating that gift of insincere moralizing with which he attempted to deceive others, and perhaps even himself, as to his real character. In judging the moral standard of that Alcibiades of Queen Anne's age, there are many counts that we would have to add to the indictment which, by Swift, were either unnoticed or condoned. But

* See a letter from *Prior to Swift*, April 25, 1721.

† "I have many years frequently resolved to go for England, but was discouraged by considering what a scene I must expect to find by the death and exile of my friends, and a thousand other disgusting circumstances: and after all, to return back again into this enslaved country to which I am condemned during existence—for I cannot call it life—would be a mortification hard to support." *Letter from Swift to the 2nd Lord Oxford*, Nov. 27, 1724. This letter is one of those amongst the Oxford MSS., for copies of which I am indebted to Mr. Elwin.

‡ "Here lies Henry St. John, in the reign of Queen Anne, Secretary of War, Secretary of State, and Viscount Bolingbroke: in the days of George I. and George II., something more and better." *Epitaph in Battersea Church.*

even setting aside all the stains which rest upon the record of his public life, there remains much in the character and utterances of Bolingbroke that must have jarred on Swift. Able as he was, Bolingbroke never could subdue that feeblest of all vanities, that leads a man to assume airs of affectation towards one, who, as he knows, can detect the transparent folly of his deception. His pretentious philosophy went for nothing with Swift, who "doubted pretenders to retirement." His vanity led him to indulge his inclination for a thin and superficial scepticism even in writing to the Dean, who turned upon him with some vigour of rebuke, unwilling as he always was to speak to his friends "as a divine." Bolingbroke defended himself in terms that can scarcely have been more palatable to Swift, whose orthodoxy, sound as he persuaded himself that it was, at least required some management. The offence which Bolingbroke gave by the empty mouthings that only irritated and disturbed, without satisfying any human soul, was not likely to be wiped out by still more flimsy defences of his religious attitude, by contemptuous patronizings of Christianity, and by his condemnations of the higher philosophy whose principles he understood as little as he practised the dictates of religion.* In short he amused himself with a quasi-philosophical religion much as he did in devising inscriptions for his greenhouse, or decorations for Dawley Farm; and his assumption of the part of theological amateur was little fitted to be pleasing to Swift.

Arbuthnot still retained his old central place amidst the company of wits, chiefly by the moral qualities that made him the superior of the others. By them his humour was rated more highly than their own, although to the world at large it was almost an unknown gift. Arbuthnot was forgetful of himself; he was indifferent to the ambitions that prompted jealousy amongst the rest. He watched with the keenest interest the success of his brethren; he guided, suggested, helped: but he remained careless about his own

* See his letter to Swift of Sept. 12, 1724, throughout.

fame. Convinced that amid the crowd of dunces, the best genius of the age was concentred in his own friends, he yet must have seen, as clearly as their detractors, the flaws in the character of each. In the annals of our literature there are not a few men who have filled something of the part that he did: but none who has filled it with such complete success of self-abnegation. It is a part that earns no wide or high-sounding fame: but it is something in an age of such envenomed detraction, and such vehemence of party hate, to have lived revered and cherished by its men of "light and leading:" to have trained their talents, and to have condoned their faults: to have died without losing their esteem: and yet without one stain, in the midst of very general corruption, on which the keen eyes of political partizans could fasten.

With Swift, however, Arbuthnot's influence was specially strong. He had the rare tact of balancing dangerous tendencies in a friend without having recourse to the certain irritation of rebuke. With Swift's cynicism Arbuthnot had an underlying sympathy. In both men their cynicism was connected closely with the most characteristic trait of their genius, and with their peculiar humour, born of the age and its experiences. The dominion of religious hypocrisy was not yet forgotten: the loathing of the cant that had made religious fervour of all kinds repulsive, was still strong upon men's minds. But they were nauseated yet more by what had succeeded to that cant, by the folly of the Wit-woulds who fancied that they had crushed hypocrisy under their flaunting vice, and whose foppery seemed to themselves, wisdom. Between the two, men like Swift and Arbuthnot took refuge in a peculiar humour that necessarily engendered cynicism. In Swift we know to what that cynicism led, and what havoc it wrought: in Arbuthnot its fruit was only a quiet and ironic apathy. He never let it eat into his soul with the corroding force from which Swift suffered. Full of affection, he knew how to bear trial with resignation, how to preserve his quiet gaiety even

amid bodily torments. His very faults were those which never lost any man a friend. "He is not without fault," says Swift:* "there is a passage in Bede highly commending the piety and learning of the Irish in that age, where after abundance of praises, he overthrows them all, by lamenting that, alas! they kept Easter at a wrong time of the year. So our doctor has every quality and virtue that can make a man amiable or useful: but alas! he hath a sort of slouch in his walk." No wonder, with a friend who knew his infirmities and his strength so well, that Swift held fast to the bond between them. "If there were a dozen Arbuthnots, I would burn my travels," he says, after telling how the main motive of Gulliver is depreciation of mankind. To Arbuthnot, in turn, Swift's depth of feeling, cynical as it was, came as a relief after the superficial brilliancy of others in the circle. His own geniality had no need to dread contact with the growing harshness of Swift's temper, and his own dignity was too well preserved to be in danger from the onslaughts of Swift's arrogance of manner.

Passing to others in that circle, the intimacy between Pope and Swift has unquestionably a far greater place in our literary history. It was now at its closest. Before Swift had left England in 1714, he had already befriended Pope. To Pope as a Roman Catholic, the Whig party was naturally repugnant: and this feeling had been strengthened by the help and admiration of Swift, and increased by the suspicions which, rightly or wrongly, Pope had conceived against Addison. When Swift returned, it was to find Pope completely estranged from those literary allies who belonged to the Whigs, and ready to join him in that natural infirmity of a literary clique, which flatters its own exclusiveness by banning the spirit of the times.

For Swift, his friendship with Pope stands midway between that with Arbuthnot and with Bolingbroke. It is not so mixed with suspicion as is the latter, not so full of kindly sympathy as the former. Swift was not blind to the ingrained insincerity

* *Swift to Pope*, Sept. 29, 1725.

which had taken deep root in Pope's nature, and he here and there hints a little ridicule of his affectations. But the full extent of Pope's twists and contrivances was known to none of his contemporaries, and Swift was of all others the most likely to ignore or think lightly of them. They jarred on none of his own moods: they were too far removed from him to let him follow all their ramifications, or trace their hidden motives. And, apart from them, there was much in Pope's character to attract Swift. His very weakness appealed to Swift's strength. His keenness of temperament, his combination of sensitive tenderness with sarcastic virulence, his unfailing tendency to impress on every dispute some personal aspect, to find in his adherents personal friends, in his opponents personal enemies —all these had their counterpart in the more masculine character of Swift. Pope's eager attachment to the little circle amid which he moved, his violent condemnation of all that did not enter into their likes and dislikes—these, too, suited with the misanthropy of Swift, tempered as it was by love for his own friends. Pope's literary models were just those that Swift admired, widely different as was the use each made of them. Pope's absolute mastery of literary form; his strict limitation of subject: the unrivalled clearness and polish of his truisms,— all suited with Swift's preference for lucid and well-defined expression, for perfect common-sense, over cloudy abstraction, strained paradox, laboured intricacy, and their attendant absurdities. But Pope accepted as a mere literary canon what was to Swift a deep-seated contempt for the limitations of human knowledge and of human power.

The two were now to meet at what may be deemed, in some respects, the height of their fame: and it was perhaps well for both that the meeting was not more prolonged, and the intercourse not more constant. As it was they came together with the attraction of common tastes, common genius, common literary schemes; of gratitude on Pope's side for early and helpful introductions: of admiration on Swift's side for a

lightness and gracefulness of touch which he could appreciate, but could not rival.

There was another of the circle whose character wins from posterity, as it did from his contemporaries, the leniency due to childlikeness and simplicity. In early days, when Scriblerus was being planned, Swift saw in Gay the most likely assistant next to Arbuthnot, had he not been too young. But youth had passed without changing poor Gay, or weaning him from his carelessness, his imprudence, his want of self-respect. Swift, however, never judged friends too hardly. Gay's slovenly sensuality, his frivolity, his petty selfishness, his exaggerated self-importance, were all occasionally trying to his friends, Swift included. But he never upbraids Gay for his indecent complaints that patrons have not opened their purse-strings wide enough. He never grudges the poet the marvellous success that a year later made him the talk of the town. He only seeks to preserve for him, out of the clutches of his own thriftlessness, some of the solid fruits which that success brought. When Gay poses as a martyr, Swift admits his claim: perhaps all the more readily that it helped him to deal a blow at political enemies.

One other there was, now gone from the circle, and remembered only as a token of the persecution which genius was supposed wrongfully to have suffered at the hand of Walpole. Swift, at least, honestly believed that Atterbury was guiltless of Jacobite plottings. He ridiculed the episode of the dog Harlequin, through which the missing link in the proof of Atterbury's guilt was established: but ridiculed it in perfect good faith. There is no doubt now as to Atterbury's guilt: but it was then concealed from his friends by a process of Jesuitical prevarication, which leaves on Atterbury's character a worse stain even than that of treason, especially in a case where treason might be so far conscientious, and was at least not uncommon. But Jesuitical as he was in this episode of his life, insincerity was not Atterbury's common failing. He

had left amongst the circle a memory which was not without its lasting effect. From him they had imbibed that refusal to subscribe to the tenet of the Whigs which regarded the Revolution as the beginning and end of the Constitution. From his whole character, his love of extremes, his anxiety to play a sensational part in some exciting drama, his resolute refusal to regard prudence or expediency in his bigoted attachment to a cause, even from his fiery vanity, the Bishop was fitted to make a deep and lasting impression upon those amongst whom his life had lain. Warm and loving in all his private relations, with the tenderness of a woman, and the courage, if not the calm judgment, of a man, he held his place in the hearts of his friends, and made it impossible for them to believe that his public acts could be stained by duplicity and treason; and not a little of their indignant protest against the Government of Walpole, not a little of their claim to be the assertors of liberty in an age which bowed before a political autocrat, is to be traced to the work, to the spirit, to the trial, and to the banishment of Atterbury.

Others survived to remind Swift of the old brilliant days. Lord Bathurst was full of gaiety now, at forty, as he remained when more than ninety years had passed over him, and had seen him the friend of Goldsmith and Sterne, as he had been of Pope and Swift. Congreve, for whom Swift had made Tory powers propitious, when the stars were against Congreve's friends, the Whigs, was still as genial a companion as ever, in spite of increasing years, failing health, and the degrading patronage with which the Duchess of Marlborough, the daughter and heiress of the great duke, had enveloped him. Peterborough was still one of the company: still as fond of roaming as ever, still as warm in his friendships, still as full of eccentricities.

Arriving in March 1726, Swift met with a reception that pleased and cheered him. There was one old tie, which had long been irksome, and which was finally broken, just before his

arrival in London. The family of Sir William Temple had little of Swift's love. His relations with Lady Giffard, Temple's sister, had been avowedly hostile. Swift now addressed a letter to another of the Temple family, Lord Palmerston, on a trumpery matter connected with the occupation of certain rooms in Trinity college, which Lord Palmerston could assign, and from which a friend of the Dean found himself likely to be removed. Swift's letter was undoubtedly written in terms not unlikely to be offensive to Lord Palmerston, although the want of courtesy in the manner of urging the claim was probably caused only by Swift's morbid fear of being supposed to shew undue subserviency. Lord Palmerston resented the tone of the letter: and with still worse taste reminded Swift of the regard due "to a family he owed so much to." This was precisely the phrase most certain to revive the rankling sore which early dependence had left in the mind of Swift: and in the state of Swift's mood at the time, it was sure to be resented. He turns upon his assailant in a letter which professes to be one of calm contempt, but which in reality shews in every line how deeply the shaft had wounded. Lord Palmerston's letter he describes, in terms of wild exaggeration, as "full of foul invectives, open reproaches, jesting flirts, and contumelious terms." "I own myself indebted to Sir William Temple," he proceeds, "for recommending me to the late King, although without success, and for his choice of me to take care of his posthumous writings. But I hope you will not charge my living in his family as an obligation, for I was educated to little purpose, if I retired to his house, on any other motives than the benefit of his conversation and advice, and the opportunity of pursuing my studies. For, being born to no fortune, I was at his death as far to seek as ever, and perhaps you will allow that I was of some use to him. This I will venture to say, that in the time when I had some little credit, I did fifty times more for fifty people, from whom I never received the least service or assistance."

Unquestionably Swift was not here so much resenting an actual injury as seizing on the opportunity offered him to pay off old scores. His relation to Sir William Temple had been—and no discussion of this or that phrase will get us beyond this—one in which poverty and genius had found themselves unwilling debtors to wealth, position, and complacent mediocrity. The results had been those which such relations always have had, and always will have. Swift paid his debt by attention, respect, and care for his patron's memory. But the family of Temple had abused him, and had dropped hints of the material advantage derived by Swift from the friendship, of his entire dependence on Sir William, and of base ingratitude on his part. This new offence was the spark which set the smouldering ashes ablaze. The episode closed that chapter in Swift's life, and left him free to dismiss it entirely from his mind.

But otherwise his reception in England was pleasant. As one of his correspondents remarked to him, "he was like the man who had hung all night from a bush, and with the daylight found that his heels were only two inches from the ground." He had dreamed, or had imagined that he dreamed, of imprisonment and halters: but he found himself no longer shunned as a dangerous associate. The asperities of party had lessened in his absence. He writes on the 16th of April to Tickell: "I am here now a month picking up the remnant of my old acquaintance, and descending to take new ones. Your people (*i.e.* the adherents of the government) are very civil, and I meet a thousand times better usage from them than from that denomination in Ireland." Gracious, however, as was his reception in political circles, it was elsewhere that his interest was centred. Bolingbroke's new house at Dawley * was open to him, where the disappointed politician was,

* Dawley House, a remnant of which yet stands amidst a dreary network of brickfield, and railway, and canal, lay between West Drayton and Hayes. It still bears traces of the picturesque quaintness peculiar to the age when it was built; but the characteristic monument of Bolingbroke's

in Pope's words, "labouring to be unambitious, but labouring in unwilling soil;" was fitfully striving to repair the ravages of debauchery by a fare of ostentatious frugality; and was aping philosophy by a sort of stage idyllicism. Within a few miles was the villa at Twickenham, where Pope was busy with freaks of miniature landscape gardening. Swift lived at first with Gay in his lodgings at Whitehall: and then during June and July he stayed, along with Gay, at Pope's villa. During these months, the three "Yahoos," as Bolingbroke, borrowing from Gulliver's phraseology by anticipation, called them, were busy over literary projects. Swift, Pope, and Arbuthnot, were planning the issue of their "Miscellanies." Gay, too, was busy over his Fables, which were to appear at Christmas. He was also working up the scheme suggested by Swift, of a Newgate pastoral, at length to take shape in the Beggar's Opera. Pope's genius was finding a new channel for itself in his "Dulness," which appeared two years later as the *Dunciad*. *Gulliver's Travels*, the fruit of Swift's years of retirement, were now receiving their finishing touches, and were canvassed and quoted amongst the company. At times, the friends rambled together through the country, renewing those memories of English life and scenery which Swift had gathered long ago. At other times Congreve and Bolingbroke joined them at Twickenham, or they passed to Arbuthnot's lodgings in town. Through Arbuthnot's influence, Swift opened a connection with the opposition court of the Prince and Princess of Wales, which seemed to offer new hopes of political influence, but led to passages in Swift's life which a biographer would fain omit.

This visit, brightened as it was by friendships renewed, was darkened by anxiety. Stella's health was breaking, and he

occupation is the great Dawley wall, with which the estate was girt, still testifying to the solidity of the original workmanship. What surprises us chiefly in this and other houses of the time is, that with so much to choose from, Swift's contemporaries should have selected just that part of the neighbourhood of London which seems least capable of attracting any whose love of the country was real and not assumed.

soon received news of her that caused him much alarm. Those round her strove to hide the truth from Swift. Mistress Dingley, blundering when blunders were possible, made Swift's anxiety ten times greater by suspense. He wrote to Sheridan and Worrall, begging for news, quick, frequent, and above all, *true*. In his letters to them and to Dr. Stopford the same mood is shewn, eager to hide the truth from himself, yet determined to know the worst: unmanned by the thought of his possible loss, but yet forcing himself to look forwards, that he may arrange for the closing scene of that life, broken and tangled for his sake, in such a way as to keep scandal at a distance. "For my part," he writes to Stopford,* "as I value life very little, so the poor casual remains of it, after such a loss, would be a burden that I must heartily beg God Almighty to enable me to bear. * * * They have writ me deceiving letters; but Mr. Worrall has been so just and prudent as to tell me the truth: which, however racking, is better than to be struck on a sudden.—*Dear Jim, pardon me, I know not what I am saying: but believe me that violent friendship is much more lasting, and as much engaging, as violent love.*" The attention on Swift's part, at such a crisis, to outside decorum, has been blamed as heartless: "in case the matter should be desperate," he writes to Worrall,† "I would have you advise, if they come to town, that they should be lodged in some airy, healthy part, and not in the Deanery: which besides, you know, cannot but be a very improper thing for that house to breathe her last in." ‡ Undoubtedly the words leave a grating sense of ill-timed and callous calculation: but we need not judge them too harshly. Into the secret of that long friendship we can never penetrate: but we know sufficiently its formal conditions. The letters

* *Swift to Stopford*, July 20, 1726.

† *Swift to Worrall*, July 15, 1726.

‡ The Deanery was in the most unhealthy district in Dublin, and was damp and ill-drained. The atmosphere in the Cathedral was dangerous to the health even of those who worshipped there.

shew clearly enough how Swift is distracted by his grief. At the same time he is penetrated by the fear that a wrong word or act may give a false aspect to a tie which is the most sacred in his life. He is in a state of nervous anxiety. As each suggestion presents itself, as each precaution occurs to him, it is put down without waiting to think of its effect. "Forgive the inconsistencies," he says to Worrall, knowing how contending feelings have distracted him while he wrote, and how strange must seem the attitude in which he stood to Stella. Not for the first time, but now more completely than ever, Swift's clear masculine perspicacity and his strong energy fail him, as the fibre of tenderness is touched in him.* "I look upon this to be the greatest event that can ever happen to me: but all my preparations will not suffice to let me bear it like a philosopher, nor altogether like a Christian." For the present, however, the blow which Swift dreaded, did not fall; and for a time Stella regained some strength.

Besides his literary and personal occupations, Swift had other thoughts during this visit. As regards politics, he was encouraged to hope that without loss either of honour or consistency, it was open to him to make terms with the new powers. In the end, the result proved that he either over-estimated his own capacity of surrendering his independence, or under-estimated the terms that would be exacted. His dealings during this visit, with Walpole, have been so much canvassed by opponents, that, for his justification, they demand a careful review.

Fortunately we have evidence enough to dispose of all doubt in the matter, and to save us from resorting to the ill-natured stories of the gossips.† From this evidence it appears, in the

* Compare for similar but lesser incidents in his life, the death of his mother (p. 192); of Mistress Long (p. 227); of young Harrison (p. 255); of Lady Ashburnham (p. 254); and, subsequently, of Gay (p. 458).

† Our chief guides are: (1) a letter from Swift to Lady Betty Germaine, of 8th January, 173$\frac{3}{4}$: (2) one from Pope to Swift of 3rd September, 1726: (3) Letters between Lord Peterborough and Swift in April, 1726; and (4) one

first place, that, whatever might be Swift's views with respect to Walpole, it was not Swift who first opened communications. "I was twice with the chief minister," he writes to Stopford on the 20th of July, "*the first time by invitation;* the *second time* at my desire, for an hour." When the first invitation came, Swift saw no reason to decline it. He had been specially careful not to attack Walpole personally, during the Drapier controversy. He had spoken with respect of Walpole's abilities. He had been well received by many of Walpole's own party. The violent pique which his literary friends formed against Walpole had not yet affected Swift. He still claimed to be an adherent of true Whiggism. But, further, he desired to make representations on behalf of Ireland: and he had a friend to help in Gay. On the other hand Walpole had heard of Swift's proposed visit to England. Archbishop Boulter,* Walpole's special emissary in Ireland, had written to give warning of it, and to urge that due watch should be kept over his motions while in England. Walpole may well have thought that he could improve on the advice of his emissary, by changing a powerful foe into a friend. Apparently the form which the first overtures took, was an invitation on the part of Walpole, to Swift and some of his friends, to dine with him at Chelsea.† The Dean accepted, and made a friendly remonstrance on the Minister's suspicion of innocent persons. He alluded, in all but name, to Gay, whom Walpole suspected to be the author of a libel against him, and who was thus debarred from court favour. Walpole doubtless understood the allusion well enough: but he was shrewd enough to treasure up this undefined application, for use at a future time. At a dinner of this sort, grave political questions could scarcely, with propriety, be touched upon: but Swift had grave political questions to urge;

from Swift to Dr. Stopford of 20th July, 1726.

* See *Boulter's Letters*, Vol. I., p. 62.

† "He invited me and some of my friends to dine with him at Chelsea." *Swift to Lady Betty Germaine*, Jan. 8, 173$\frac{3}{2}$.

and for this, amongst other reasons, he pursued the acquaintance. At this moment the ill-government of Ireland was his strongest thought. He had even pressed his views on the Princess of Wales, and had obtained her permission to renew his complaints, if she should come to be Queen.* It was for this, then, that he sought, through Lord Peterborough, a formal interview with Walpole. It was granted with a readiness, and with a choice of days, that Prime Ministers do not, one would fancy, generally grant to men whom they understand to come as suitors for favours.† Swift had no personal request to make. He came as the representative of Ireland, to ask the redress of her grievances as a right, and feeling that the boldness of his advice would be the best claim on the gratitude of the minister. Walpole received him, not because he thought these grievances should be redressed, but because he wished as a prudent minister to learn the nature of the charges, and, as a man of the world, to gain Swift. The interview led to nothing. "We differed," says Swift, "on every point." An account of the interview was sent to Lord Peterborough, the next day, by Swift, with a request that he would show it to Sir Robert Walpole.‡ This version of the conversation must therefore be received as expressing the absolute truth.

From it we learn that Swift, when the interview began, at once approached the subject of Ireland. Both he and Walpole seem to have been perfectly frank with one another: but they quickly saw that there was no basis for agreement. Swift found that Walpole, as he says, "had conceived opinions which I could not reconcile to the notions I had of liberty." There was nothing for it but to part: and in his letter to

* *Swift to Lady Suffolk*, July 27, 1731. The original in the British Museum shews that Scott misprints the date slightly.

† *Lord Peterborough to Swift*, undated letter of April, 1726.

‡ Walpole had been knighted, on the revival of the order of the Bath, in June, 1725, referred to by Swift in his Ballad on Quadrille.

"The king of late drew forth his sword
(Thank God, 'twas not in wrath),
And made of many a squire and lord
An unwashed Knight of Bath," &c.

Peterborough Swift sums up, as in a last word, the grievances which he has so often urged elsewhere,* that they may be again laid before Walpole. There is something significant in the closing argument which Swift gives for consideration of these wrongs: "because they have been all brought upon that kingdom (Ireland) since the Revolution: which, however, is a blessing annually celebrated there with the greatest zeal and sincerity." These words, with their cynical hint, exhibit a feeling which was coming over others besides Swift, as time went on. Neither he nor they would formally admit that their adherence to the principles of the Revolution was one whit less strong than it had been. But the conviction was none the less surely making way, that these benefits had been, in Ireland above all, purchased at no small cost. It was this growing conviction, that first drew Swift more widely apart from Walpole and the Whigs than he was ready to confess even to himself; and the divergence was quickly increased by association with the literary band, the first principle of whose creed was condemnation of all Walpole's acts.

An interview so important and so widely known as that of Swift and Walpole, was sure to breed a swarm of rumours. Swift, it was said, had been bought: the Drapier would be heard no more: some snug berth would be found where he could slumber in supreme content: and finally, it was said, the Bishopric of Cloyne had been given to him. Such rumours served Walpole's purpose admirably, and the spark of gossip was fanned into flame, by him and his under-strappers. Presently Swift found that his hint for Gay at the Chelsea dinner was represented as a mean attempt to crave pardon for himself.† Swift spared no pains to make the real circum-

* The grievances, like almost all those against which Swift wrote and spoke, are all put forward from the point of view of the English and Protestant settlers, not of the great mass of the Roman Catholics of Ireland. *Their* benefit was at most only incidental.

† *Swift to Lady Betty Germaine*, Jan. 8, 173$\frac{3}{4}$.

stances clear. Not only has he not sought promotion, but he will not, he says, accept it "except upon conditions that would not be granted."*

The hope of reconciliation, never strong, was now completely dead. "I absolutely broke with the first minister," he says to Stopford, "and have never seen him since." The only result of the attempt was to estrange Swift from others indirectly connected with Walpole. Swift fancied that even with Lord Carteret, he could no longer be on friendly terms: "I am all to pieces," he says, "with the Lord Lieutenant." He is "weary of being among ministers whom he cannot govern, who are all rank Tories in Government, and worse than Whigs in Church."† But, strong as was Swift's conviction that the hopes of reconciliation were at an end, the overtures were renewed by Walpole. The renewal disposes, if need were, of any suspicion of undue compliance on the part of Swift. Writing on the 3rd of September, soon after Swift's departure from London, Pope, who was still on fairly good terms with Walpole, reported a conversation with him, in which the Minister had regretted Swift's premature departure, and had hinted at a possible remove to England.‡ It was then too late. Swift was already in communication with Pulteney, Walpole's most relentless foe.

Thus end the dealings between the two. It would be a speculation, not without an odd interest, to attempt to trace the possible results in our literature and in our politics of a closer union between the Drapier and the all-powerful minister. It was perhaps fortunate for both that the scheme ended so soon as it did. When Swift was on the eve of another journey to London, next year, he alludes almost jocularly to Walpole, and threatens that, failing better treatment, *vengeance ecclésiastique* will be his.§ It is reasonable to

* *Swift to Stopford*, July 20, 1726.
† *Swift to Tickell*, July 7, 1726.
‡ *Pope to Swift*, Sept. 3, 1726.
§ See *Swift to Mrs. Howard*, Nov. 17, 1726; also *Swift to Mrs. Howard*, Feb. 1, $17\frac{27}{28}$.

interpret this as the expression of a broken amnesty: but even if we take it as a hint for renewing overtures of peace, it is scarcely such a renewal as would be hinted by a compliant and yet repulsed petitioner for the crumbs of Ministerial favour.

Such are the plain facts of an important episode in Swift's career. They have been distorted by his enemies so as to bear an aspect to which nothing in Swift's conduct is akin. Proud, overbearing, prejudiced, in certain ways ambitious, and not seldom unjust—all these epithets no fair biographer can deny to be applicable to Swift. But weakly compliant he could not be, without ceasing to be himself. Distortion has been helped out by gossip. Chesterfield told a college tutor that he knew Swift had made an offer of his pen to Walpole as the price of preferment. The foundation of his knowledge was the report of Colonel Chartres, the man whose battered and noisome debauchery was of all things vilest in Swift's eyes. The story shews its own baselessness at every step, even were it not disproved by what we know. Other legends of the same kind copy one another so as to betray the unity of their fictitious origin. One of these tells of Walpole answering Swift's request for a change to England by pointing to a tree which transplantation had destroyed. Another puts the metaphor of the tree in the mouth of Swift: and this time it is a falling tree to which Swift compares himself, meeting with rebuke from Walpole for having imitated the tree by leaning on a falling wall.

Leaving politics and literature behind, Swift faced the journey back to Ireland, with better hopes of Stella. Bolingbroke urged him to winter at Montpelier, and had it not been for anxieties at home, and for the gloomy warnings of his own life-long malady which excitement aggravated, Swift might have agreed. He left London on the 15th of August, and after a journey of only seven days found himself in a scene "as unknown as the antipodes," where he could only dream of those

he had left behind.* His departure was lamented by Pope in a letter which, strained as it is, shows clearly enough how Pope's feminine weakness clung for support to the stronger and more masculine intellect that was now dominating his own, and making his genius work according to its will.

On his return to Dublin Swift had striking evidence of the estimation in which he was held in the country whose love and reverence he held so lightly. A quick journey had carried him, as he deemed, from civilization to barbarism. When his ship was signalled in Dublin Bay, the citizens turned out to do him honour. The Corporation met the ship in wherries: the quays were decked with bunting: the bells were rung: and the city received, in gala fashion, her most beloved citizen. The contrast was strange, to the time when he had taken possession of his deanery amidst insults, and had been avoided in the streets as a dangerous, because a fallen, man.

But the most pleasing circumstance to Swift was the fact that his absence from England was not to be long. He was to return in spring, and meanwhile he keeps up a brisk intercourse by letter with Gay, Pope, and Bolingbroke; with Arbuthnot, Mrs. Howard, and Mr. Pulteney. The first were the partners in his literary schemes: Mrs. Howard gave him a hold on the centre of opposition in Leicester House:† and Pulteney was cultivating his friendship, as the champion whose aid might best compass the organization of Walpole's foes.

But something of more lively interest to us connects itself with this visit to England. Swift left on the 15th of August: and early in November, *Gulliver's Travels* appeared.

In regard to no one of Swift's works was there, even from the first, so little real secrecy, as about this. For years before they were published, the *Travels* had been talked about, as familiarly known, amongst his friends.‡ Vanessa had read them:

* *Swift to Pope*, Aug. 30, 1726, wrongly dated Oct. 30, 1727, in the Dublin quarto, and in Scott.

† The residence of the Prince of Wales.

‡ Miss Vanhomrigh refers to an

Bolingbroke, Gay, Pope, and Arbuthnot had joked on their episodes without reserve: and even Mrs. Howard writes to Swift as she could not have written without knowing that his authorship was an open secret. About the *Travels of Gulliver* almost the only mystery is the fact that the manuscript was conveyed to the printer by a secret channel. Swift felt some misgivings as to the effect of the book upon the political powers that were. He was little disposed to recoil from their avowed enmity: but neither did he wish, unnecessarily, to make the breach irreparable. The hesitation, on political grounds, was strengthened by another cause. Swift entertained doubts as to the vigour of his own powers. He never felt himself fitted to criticize his own works. Age had crept over him, and his anxiety lest age should bring mental decay, was morbid in its intensity. The publication of *Gulliver* roused in him these misgivings. He paused before giving it to the world. When it was launched, he looked with nervous interest for the criticisms of his friends. He had, by the stratagem about the manuscript, left himself free to change and recast what might be condemned. This literary bashfulness, then, combined with political caution, supplied a reason for some slight concealment: but both arguments soon lost their strength. He had soon no terms to keep with the Government: fears ceased to disturb him as to the merits of the book.

Swift made no secret of his motive. He wrote *Gulliver*, as he says, "to vex the world, rather than to divert it." * He "hated and detested that animal called man." As age grew on him, Swift's love of individuals had increased, but his general misanthropy had also deepened. "I love only individuals," he says. No one saw more clearly than himself,

incident in the *Travels* in a letter written about 1721 or 1722: Bolingbroke speaks of them in a Letter to Swift of Jan. 1, $17\frac{23}{24}$: again in a Letter of July 24, 1725: Pope in a Letter of Sept. 14, 1725: and Swift himself in a Letter to Pope of Sept. 29, 1725. As the time of their appearance approaches, the references become even more frequent in the correspondence of Swift and his friends.

* *Swift to Pope*, Sept. 29, 1725.

the ravages of that disease, misanthropy. He knew how ignoble it was. He was vexed with himself for the contempt he wasted on the poor Irish, whose sufferings and degradation he saw, and whose vindicator he had been. He envied those whose minds were free from the "fierce indignation that lacerated his heart."* Bitter against mankind, he could neither confine, nor master, his hatred. Thus upon the "foundation of misanthropy," to use Swift's own words, the "whole building of his travels was erected." But plainly as he has told us the leading motive of the book, powerfully as that motive is stamped on it as a whole, vivid as is the impression which it leaves, our best means of gathering its full significance, of fixing its place in Swift's biography, is to compare one part with another. To trace the possible sources of suggestion, to estimate the indebtedness of Swift to his predecessors in the same line of allegory, is the business of a commentary and not of a biography. But the book itself must be examined, if we are to master an important chapter in the story of Swift's life.

The scheme was one of those which took birth in the councils of Scriblerus, and many of its outlines must have been drawn even before Swift ceased to form one of that congenial circle. In the earlier and more aimless years of his banishment, these outlines were filled in: and the book received its finishing touches after that fierce struggle, which stirred Swift's energy once more, but which left him face to face with approaching old age, with the fire of his consuming indignation burning more fiercely than before. As we might expect each of these moods is reflected in the book.

* "A friend of his found him in this condition (weary of life) one day: and Swift, putting the question to him, whether corruptions and villanies of men in power, did not eat his flesh and exhaust his spirits? he answered, that in truth they did not: he then asked in a fury, Why—why—how can you help it, how can you avoid it? His friend calmly replied, Because I am commanded to the contrary, 'Fret not thyself because of the ungodly.' This raised a smile and changed the conversation to something less severe and sour." Delany's *Observations on Lord Orrery's Remarks*, p. 148.

It is in Lilliput that the original conception of the book is most apparent. It was intended to parody the style in which travels were dressed out for the public by the literary hacks of the day: and though it was not in Swift's nature to confine himself entirely to such an aim, he adheres to it with some fidelity. He carefully maintains the circumstantiality of the narrative: and preserves, with elaborate accuracy, the due proportion between the pigmies and their surroundings. He cannot refrain altogether from references to contemporary affairs: but his side strokes at Walpole, at the French wars, at the divisions of party and of sect, are occasional only, and not systematic. Mankind are ridiculed by the travesty of their works and ways in the court of Lilliput: but there is nothing unkindly in the laughter: and the humour with which Gulliver is made to accept in all good faith the honours and precedence which the pigmies of Lilliput confer, is much more apparent than any satiric bitterness. It is only towards the close that Swift's words reveal the vehemence of anger against party divisions, bred in him during these weary years of banishment.

In Brobdingnag, the humour is not less, but the satire is far more bitter and intense. Brobdingnag is not merely Lilliput seen, as Scott puts it, through the other end of the telescope. To ridicule mankind by comparing them with pigmies was one thing: to make them contemptible by using them as a means of ridiculing a superior order of beings, was quite another. In Lilliput the humour is on the surface: the satire is only occasional: in Brobdingnag the satire never allows itself to be forgotten long. Human nature seemed to Swift contemptible chiefly for its infinite pettiness and triviality, for its endless and futile restlessness: for its pigmy strainings to create difficulties, for the blind folly with which it entangled itself in labours beyond its strength. In the natives of Brobdingnag the leading feature is that massive simplicity after which Swift's soul longed. Political science they deem a waste of time. They have ceased to multiply books. Of philosophy they are

fortunate in having no conception. To pursue legal niceties is, with them, a capital crime. They are wise enough to see their own counterpart in creatures so contemptible as human beings, and are not blind to their own faults, reflected in these, "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin, that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth." But human nature, in Gulliver, is content "to wink at its own littleness," and to forget the gulf between itself and the giants by which it is surrounded.

Yet bitter as is the drift of the satire in Brobdingnag, it is not without relief. We are carried on by the story, and in amusement at the mishaps of Gulliver we forget that we are laughing at ourselves. But in Laputa, and the Houyhnhnms, we advance a step further. The spirit of the allegory is changed. We miss the nicely adjusted proportions, and the careful construction of the preceding voyages. It is not without purpose, that Gulliver is made to return from Lilliput and Brobdingnag, by vaguely described and almost miraculous means; while from Laputa he sails to the allied empire of Japan, and from the Houyhnhnms prepares for his voyage as he would have done in starting from Rotherhithe. In the latter region, we are no longer in realms of pure fancy, but only in places where the ordinary laws of nature are confounded in a bewildering jumble. Fancy and reality are constantly intermingled. As the Academy of Lagado comes nearer to the type of human crotchet-mongers, and as the Yahoo typifies more closely humanity, so the construction of the allegory fails, but so also the directness of the satire is increased. In Lagado we are in the midst of our familiar wits and Greshamites: in Glubbdubdrib, we see the falsities of our own history exposed: in the Struldbrugs of Luggnagg, we see the hideousness that human nature would present, were it but permitted to ripen to full maturity. So in the Yahoos we see a counterpart of human nature, free only from the dangerous ingredient of "a little reason," which makes humanity more detestable. Swift speaks

no longer with the mouth of Scriblerus, but with a voice whose reality falsifies the original scheme, and from a heart torn by that fierce anger that he vented on his kind.

The voyage to Laputa is especially full of faults of construction. Its strokes are constantly delivered, not with the impartiality of fable, but with the directness of personal spleen. The flaws in Atterbury's indictment might have served to give point to a political pamphlet,* but had no place in a satire on humanity. No medium of parable was necessary to prove that crazy and self-absorbed projectors were contemptible: but if, on the other hand, Swift meant to satirize anything else than the *abuse* of human powers of scientific investigation, his satire stands condemned by the logic of facts.

But, notwithstanding, this third voyage tells us much both of Swift's opinions and of his mood. It is there that he "is filled with melancholy" to find one class of projectors without repute —those who sought to make the public weal prevail. It is there that the confessions of those summoned from the grave repeat for us Swift's views on the notabilities of the past. Above all it is there that Gulliver finds the Struldbrugs, the unmitigated gloom of whose existence reflects the morbid despair with which Swift awaited old age.

If it is the voyages to Lilliput and to Brobdingnag, in which no thought of the satire they contain mingles with the interest of the story, that have proved most attractive to children, it is the voyage to the Houyhnhnms which is likely to excite most interest amongst men. On its coarseness we need not dwell. But beyond that fault, we may admit that the fable is clumsy: that the comparison between the Houyhnhnms and their counterparts is often mere verbal quibbling: that in the fancy of horses ruling men, there is no great depth of satiric force. We

* As a fact, the incident of the dog sent over to Atterbury, which was made much of in his trial, and which Swift makes Gulliver suggest to the Laputans as worthy of their attention, has been since proved to have suggested to the prosecution a correct train of evidence.

may admit further that Swift deserts matter of general concern, and here also attacks particular classes from motives of personal irritation. But all this fails to affect the real interest of the satire. Its central feature is contrast between the Houyhnhnm, representing, in himself, and as the negation of all human attributes, the type of Stoical and impassive dignity; and the Yahoo, as the picture of degradation, the points of distinction between whom and human beings gradually drop away, leaving humanity without one shred of defence for its own self-respect. Step by step the force of the contrast gains upon us: from a picture full of warning, it changes into a sentence of despair: with ruthless hand it throws down the fancied dignity of humanity, strips off the trappings and disguises with which we deceive ourselves, and leaves us face to face with the stern realities of our nature and our lot. We feel how scathing must have been the contempt for his kind, how unrelenting the clearness of vision, that had to seek relief from smooth conventionalities by pitiless delineation such as this. But a further question still remains. We can scarcely doubt that Swift summed up the book in this contrast between Houyhnhnm and Yahoo. But did he satisfy himself with the ideal Houyhnhnm? Was the formal Stoicism, typified in the ruling caste, Swift's conception of the highest morality? Was that absence of passion and emotion, that negation of natural affection, that level and unloveable monotony, what Swift most admired? If it was so, then his ideals were shaped in a mould strangely different from anything in his own consciousness. If it was not so, was this picture but another ply of the satire on humanity, whose best ideals could be attained only by eliminating all that made life worth living, but whose passions and emotions, when ripened to full maturity, ended only in the loathsomeness of the Yahoo?

There was no long doubt as to the reception of the book. It was quickly in the mouths of all. By the highest and the lowest it was read, from the Cabinet Council to the nursery.

Even the Duchess of Marlborough confesses that she has made a life-long mistake in treating its author as her foe.* If he is supposed to be the author, Gay tells him, he is not much injured by the belief. So Pope tells him, "he needed not have been so secret." † With what is clearly nothing more than an affected ignorance, Pope repeats the story of the publication. "Motte received his copy, he tells me, he knew not from whence nor from whom, dropped at his house in the dark from a hackney coach: by computing the time, I find it was after you left England: so, for my part, I suspend my judgment." ‡ Before the month was out Lord Peterborough and Mrs. Howard had written to Swift as to the author, the last signing herself by the name given to a maid of honour by *Gulliver*, as "Sieve Yahoo." § Swift answered her letter in a disguise that was pretty plainly an assumed one. ‖

The reception of the book pretty clearly proved that there were in Swift no signs of failing originality. And as for danger, Swift had followed his own maxim too well to be troubled on that head. "In the Attic Commonwealth," he says

* *Gay to Swift*, Nov. 17, 1726.

† *Pope to Swift*, Nov. 16, 1726.

‡ It is surely not unreasonable to suppose that Pope himself may have been the friend who dropped the manuscript from the coach, and who takes this means of informing Swift how he had carried out his commission. From the *Dublin Weekly Journal*, it is possible to fix exactly the date when the first Dublin Edition appeared. The *Journal* of Nov. 26, 1726, contains an advertisement of the book, as "in the press, and will be published next week." The *Journal* of Dec. 3 repeats the advertisement, with the heading "Just published." According to Gay's letter of Nov. 17, the London Edition was issued about the 7th or 8th Nov. The intervening period is scarcely long enough for a pirated edition: and we are almost forced to conclude that Swift may have given help to the speedy issue of the book in Dublin.

§ The names are inconsistent, one belonging to the third voyage, the other to the fourth.

‖ Swift's answer is amongst the Suffolk MSS. in the British Museum: and enables us to correct the form which it bears in Scott's Edition. The date, not doubtful as Scott represents it, is *Nov.* 28, 1726: the letter is written in a character much larger than Swift ordinarily used, and with some slight pretence of disguise, which could deceive no one accustomed to his handwriting: and lastly, it is signed, not "Jon. Swift," as Scott's edition represents, but "Lemuel Gulliver."

elsewhere,* "it was the privilege and birthright of every citizen and poet to rail aloud and in public, or to expose upon the stage by name any person they pleased, though of the greatest figure, whether a Creon, an Hyperbolus, an Alcibiades, or a Demosthenes: but, on the other side, the least reflecting word let fall against the people in general, was immediately caught up and revenged upon the authors, however considerable for their quality or their merits. Whereas in England, it is just the reverse of all this." Obedience to the maxim saved the complacency and avoided the anger of individuals. "None accuse it of particular reflections," say Pope and Gay, using, curiously enough, the very same words. Some, no doubt, like the Lord ——, of whom Gay speaks ironically, were offended that humanity, so honoured in having produced them, should be scurvily treated by Gulliver. Others, like the dapper critic Lord Orrery at a later day, were shocked that any man should be able to find in himself the material for such a picture. But for the most part men were amused, not hurt. The cap fitted so well in general, that it was assumed by none in particular, and hung upon its pole to the delectation of the passers-by.

Some of his friends offered criticism on this or that passage: a few thought Laputa dull: but all read: and what pleased Swift even more, some readers were persuaded of the actual truth of the story. Arbuthnot had an acquaintance who sought for Lilliput on the map. Another told him that he had fallen in with a ship-master who knew Gulliver well, but found that the printer had made a mistake: he lived in Wapping, not in Rotherhithe. An Irish Bishop, Swift heard, thought the book full of lies, and piqued himself on the discernment that "hardly believed a word of it." Arbuthnot expects a run for the book as great as that of *Bunyan*: Gulliver, he thinks, is a happy man that at his age can write such a merry book. As a merry book, it has been in great measure accepted: and what was

* The Author's Preface to the *Tale of a Tub*.

written to vex mankind, has been largely read to amuse children.

When *Gulliver* had already taken the world by storm, and was passing rapidly through new editions;* when the Miscellanies of Swift and Pope were almost ready for issue,† Swift returned to England on the 9th of April, 1727. He was to be absent from Dublin for six months, and meant to try the waters of Aix-la-Chapelle. Arriving, he was seized on by his friends as men seize a recovered treasure. Pope longed to renew their rambles, to wander over Lord Bathurst's woods at Cirencester, to linger with him in the Grotto, and to plan new literary ventures. Pulteney and Bolingbroke were eager to brace him for new political struggles. Peterborough was bent on patching up the broken communications with Walpole. Arbuthnot sought him for pure friendship, Chesterfield for wit, and a greater than any, Voltaire, was now to cultivate the acquaintance of Gulliver, by delicate flattery. Leicester House was open to him, and by the ladies there he was encouraged to renew something of those habits of brow-beating that had been his privilege in the Court of Queen Anne. To the world, Swift's fame stood at its height. To himself, he was a prisoner who had but for a moment broken his prison bars to tantalize his eyes with a vision of freedom. He was a lonely old man, with affections all tangled, hope all gone, despair mastering him, the cloud of a great dread hanging over him, and bringing its gloom ever more closely over his life.

For the politics of the opposition, Swift had little inclination.

* Even in France, parts of the book had already been dramatized, and appeared in the theatres. *Lady Bolingbroke to Swift*, about February, 172$\frac{7}{8}$. As to the editions of *Gulliver*, see Appendix VIII.

† Pope announces to Swift (letter of March 8, 17$\frac{27}{28}$) that the "Miscellany is now quite printed." Pope was "prodigiously pleased with the volume," in which he and Swift were "to walk hand in hand down to posterity." It was one of an issue of three volumes, which Ford, when afterwards writing to Swift, and pressing the need of a collected edition of his works, calls "that jumble with Pope, &c., in three volumes, which put me in a rage whenever I meet them." (*Ford to Swift*, Nov. 6, 1733.)

He was too old for the struggle, and it was only occasionally that he could rouse himself to it. But in the hopes and fears excited by the sudden death of George I. on the 11th of June, Swift did so far share. Leicester House was now the Court of St. James's. For the moment Walpole's power seemed to be at an end. Mrs. Howard, George the Second's mistress, so long cultivated by the wits, was now to be the dispenser of court favour. Sir Spencer Compton became Minister, apparently for no other reason than that the Minister of George I. could scarcely be the Minister of his son. Walpole had, however, but a short time to wait. Compton was soon thrown aside for incapacity. Mrs. Howard soon showed how little real influence was hers. The Queen and Walpole became the real possessors of all power. The hopes of the opposition dwindled away more quickly than they had grown.

To Swift the disappointment was not much. Harder blows were falling on him. His malady recurred with a fierceness it had never shown before. He felt his memory dulled, his brain benumbed, his reason threatened. And to add to this, news came to him in August, that Stella's health was again declining. Her strength was completely undermined: the momentary flicker had died away, and her end was near. To Sheridan and Worrall, Swift writes in language of even more bitter anguish than that of the year before. He cannot face the blow: he cannot come to see her die. Let them tell him only the bare fact, with no circumstances: these he could not bear to read. Why should he struggle against his own malady? Was he to live only that he might lose all that made life worth having? "What" he cries, "am I to do in this world? I am able to hold up my sorry head no longer."

The blow lingers yet before it falls. His own malady lightens. But his hopes and interest in English politics were ended. All called him to Dublin, where his home was, where he may be near, if not present at, Stella's death-bed, where he may creep to his own lair when reason fails. Even the society

of those he most prized in England became irksome, and he abruptly quitted Pope's house at Twickenham, where he had been staying, for London. About the middle of September, with grief and foreboding at his heart, he quits, for the last time, the circles that he loved so well.

By a curious chance there has turned up a memorial of Swift, on this sad journey homewards, which gives us a picture, drawn for no eye but his own, of his state of mind in this gloomiest moment of a gloomy life. It is rarely that we can get any utterances of a man's mind so completely natural—casual stones, as it were, cast aside, that might have gone to the construction of something greater: the wayward freaks of fancy that show us how Swift's pen was moved by each passing whim.* Reaching Holyhead on the 24th of September, (1727), he found that the packet had left; and stress of weather as well as the want of passengers prevented his crossing for more than a week. During that week, he wrote, in a little notebook that he had picked up from George Dodington's desk, and that is now preserved at South Kensington, an account of his lonely thoughts from day to day. Here and there, he cannot avoid recurring "to the suspense he is in about his dearest friend;" but, for the most part, the notebook, where it does not bear upon his own doings during these dismal days, is occupied with the woes of the country to which he is doomed, and reflections on the literary topics which he has discussed with his friends at Dawley, and Twickenham, and Whitehall. It is thus he breaks out in regard to Ireland;—

"Remove me from this land of slaves,
Where all are fools, and all are knaves.
Where every fool and knave is bought,
Yet kindly sells himself for nought.
Where Whig and Tory fiercely fight
Who's in the wrong, who in the right,
And when their country lies at stake
They only fight for fighting's sake;

* For the contents of the Notebook, see Appendix IX.

While English sharpers take the pay,
And then stand by to see fair play.
Meantime the Whig is always winner,
And for his courage gets—a dinner."

Reflection over the literary schemes which occupied the mind of Pope, and which had doubtless formed the subject of much earnest discussion in the evenings at the Twickenham villa, leads Swift in his solitude to pen these memorable lines, as a testament to posterity:

"I do hereby give notice to posterity, that having been the author of several writings, both in prose and verse, which have passed with good success, it hath drawn upon me the censure of innumerable attempters and imitators and censurers, many of whose names I know, but shall in this be wiser than Virgil and Horace, by not delivering their names down to future ages; and at the same time disappoint that tribe of writers whose chief end next to that of getting bread, was an ambition of getting their names upon record, by answering or retorting their scurrilities: and would slily have made use of my resentment to let the future world know that there were such persons now in being. I do therefore charge my successors in fame, by virtue of being an Ancient two hundred years hence, to follow the same method. Dennis, Blackmore, Bentley, and several others, will reap great advantage by those who have not observed my rule. And Heaven forgive Mr. Pope, who hath so grievously transgressed it, by transmitting so many names of forgotten memory, full at length, to be known by readers in succeeding times, who perhaps may be seduced to Duck Lane and Grub Street, and there find some of the very treatises he mentions in his Satires. I heartily applaud my own innocency and prudence upon this occasion, who never named above six authors of remarkable worthlessness. Let the fame of the rest be upon Mr. Pope and his children. Mr. Gay, although more sparingly, hath gone upon the same mistake."

The *Journal* itself, with its minute record of these days, is a curious proof of self-inspection. We see even in this glimpse of his inner mood how utterly impossible it was for him to rest. The minutest circumstance is tortured into an occupation. He discusses his own relations to the homely figures round him: he sees them moving like ghosts about him, as strange and as insignificant to him, as he is to them. "By my conscience," he says, "I believe even Cæsar would be the same

without his army at his back."* Powerful as was the weapon he wielded in his satire, he is forced to confess it powerless here. He amuses himself by planning how he would act, were it always thus with him. His dreams carry him back to Pope and Bolingbroke, strangely jumbled up with anticipations of his Dublin life. He sees them in his cathedral, where nothing was as it ought to be, where no servants were at hand, and all the surplices were locked up, and the pews broken. To crown all, Bolingbroke was preaching from his pulpit; and vexing Swift by quoting Wycherley by name.

Amidst such phantoms of those that cherished him, and to whom his thoughts were so ready to turn back: amidst such gloomy anticipations of the home that awaited him for what remained of his life; in anxiety, in restlessness, in gloom; Swift passed for the last time out of the brilliant circle in England, and came again to take his place at the head of the small band that were struggling against the wrongs of Ireland.

* There is a curious parallel to these words of the *Journal*, to be found in the voyage to Brobdingnag. Speaking of an indignity he had to suffer in his solitude amidst the giants, "the King of Great Britain himself," Gulliver says, "in my condition, must have undergone the same distress."

CHAPTER XV.

THE LAST CHAPTER IN SWIFT'S PUBLIC WORK.

1727—1737.

ÆTAT. 60—70.

Swift's autumn in Ireland—Stella's approaching end—Their relations in the last scene—Stella's Will—Her death—The funeral—The blank in Swift's life—"Only a woman's hair"—Swift on Irish Politics—Statement of Irish wrongs—The remedies proposed by others than Swift—Lord Molesworth—Thomas Prior—Arthur Dobbs—Swift's place in these discussions—*Answer to a Memorial* &c.—*Maxims controlled in Ireland*—*A Short view of the State of Ireland*—*A Modest Proposal* &c.—*Answer to the Craftsman*—Swift and the Corporation—*Traulus*—Swift's speech at the Guildhall—*Advice to the Freemen of Dublin*—Swift and the defence of the Church—The Bills for residence and for division of benefices—Swift's anger with the Bishops—*Modus* for the Tithe on Hemp—The tithe on Agistment—Swift and the *Legion Club*—Swift and English politics—Sympathy with the professions of Bolingbroke and Pulteney—Swift's *Proposal for virtue.*

SWIFT had quitted Pope's house at Twickenham with a haste that looked like flight. He had buried himself for a short time in London and then left England for ever. A cloud was hanging over him, under the gloom of which he must suffer alone. The brilliant affectations of Dawley, the keen and self-absorbed satire of Twickenham, were no medicines fit for his disease. Disappointments had now brought their last, and by far their worst, result, in deep-rooted misanthropy, strengthening its grasp upon his whole nature year by year. Ill-health and infirmities were forcing him to feel that he was a drag upon the society of the wits. Lastly, and more than all, he feared that his maladies might have results for which he could not ask their sympathy without possibly provoking their sneers. Dreary as it was, there was no place for him but home.

In his lonely deanery-house Swift passed an autumn that must have been sad enough. The blow that had been lifted for a short time, was now surely descending on her to whom his heart clung most earnestly of all on earth. There could be no ending but one to the consumption that had laid its grasp on her: and for these few months Swift waited, with what torturing grief we know by the letters he had written when absent in London.*

Of the last scene of that life, whose faithful love and devotion have won for themselves immortality, we know but little. Stories have been told of what passed between Esther Johnson and the Dean, so inconsistent that we are left to choose between them, on the best grounds that we may.† What seems in some respects a fairly well authenticated story, represents their parting to have had some added bitterness from the harshness of Swift. It is Sheridan who tells us that, on the approach of death, Stella besought Swift to acknowledge their marriage before the world: that his only answer was to turn on his heel, and quit her presence for ever: and that her last hours were spent in inveighing against the cruelty of him on whom all her life's devotion had been spent. If the evidence, however, has been satisfactorily dealt with, in its own place, we are entitled to set aside a story which would reflect on Swift more hardly than any other recorded incident.

* It is curious how little of reference there is to Esther Johnson, in Swift's correspondence with his literary friends. Only Bolingbroke, whose taste was none of the most fastidious, mentions the name of Stella two or three times; and then with words of fashionable cant, entirely incongruous in the circumstances. In Sept. 1724, he desires to hear Swift

"*Inter vina fugam Stellæ mœrere protervæ.*"

"Your *Star*," he writes in July 1725. "will probably hinder you from taking the journey" (to England). With still more gross vulgarity, he sends (in Feb. 172$\frac{5}{6}$) some fans which Swift is to "dispose of to the present Stella, whoever she may be." Esther Johnson had then just escaped an almost fatal illness, so we may guess how Swift received such jests. In no letter to Bolingbroke does Swift mention her name. Even Addison knew her only in Ireland.

† These are dealt with, in detail, and the evidence for each is examined, in Appendix No. V.

Without repeating here the details of argument, it is enough to sum up the impression which the various traditions give us of the general features of Stella's last days. The final scene in what had been a long mystery, whose full meaning was perhaps not clear even to the chief actors themselves, was now approaching. Stella had been content to fulfil her part of the bond by unquestioning and unfailing love. Swift had paid her by an affection, which, severe and abnormal as was the restraint he placed on it, was the warmest feeling of his life. That bond had been sealed by a formal union, kept secret from the world. The refusal to announce it came, originally, from Swift: and whether or not he made any offer of an avowal, as time went on, and as the way seemed open for it, this would not affect the painful impression which the original refusal must have left on Stella. In her last hours, this impression may have recurred with peculiar bitterness: and not from resentment, or from unwillingness to accede to her dying request, but only from the pain that her regrets would cause, Swift may have withdrawn from a death-bed, whose pangs he could do nothing to alleviate. That he watched the course of the last struggle, that he longed passionately for any gleam of hope, and that when the end came, he looked back on the past with no feeling but the bitterest sorrow, on the future with no prospect but of loneliness and gloom, we believe to be as certain as any fact recorded in Swift's biography. But with all his sensitivity, and amid all his gloom, Swift's later words never once reveal remorse, or suggest that different action of his own might have broken through, or even lightened, the decree of fate.

The end did not come very rapidly. Pain and asthmatic oppression slowly did their work. On the 30th of December, Esther Johnson made a Will,* in which she bequeathed the interest of her fortune to her mother, Mrs. Mose, still living at Farnham, and to her sister Ann, now Mrs. Filby: after the death of both to go towards the stipend of a chaplain in

* See Appendix X.

Dr. Steevens's Hospital in Dublin. The Will contains but little reference to Swift, save as it leaves to him certain papers, which we may presume included his own letters: and entrusts him with the duty of acting as trustee for his own cousin, Mrs. Honoria Swanson, in respect of a small legacy which Esther Johnson left her. But on the other hand, this very trust seems to preclude the idea of anger on Stella's part; and the provisions of the Will are precisely those with which Swift indicated his agreement in a letter written from London more than a year before.* If any inference is to be drawn from the Will itself, it is certainly not that Esther Johnson wrote it when moved by resentment against Swift: but rather that she faithfully fulfilled his directions, both as to its main provisions, and as to those minor points, with which his name is connected.

At six o'clock on the evening of Sunday, the 28th of January, $17\frac{2}{2}\frac{8}{7}$, the end came. It appears from the paper which Swift began to write the same night, that he had some company with him at dinner, according to his usual custom.† A note was brought to him at eight in the evening: but it was only at eleven o'clock that he found himself alone with his grief, with no solace but to think on what he had lost—"the truest, most virtuous, and valuable friend, that I, or perhaps any other person, was ever blessed with."‡ In words that were perhaps never meant for any eye but his own, he wrote down his feelings, and the record of her character, beginning that night, and continuing from day to day, save when "his head aches, and he can write no more."

On the evening of Tuesday, the 30th of January, Stella was uried in St. Patrick's, according to the directions of her Will.

* *Swift to Worrall*, July 15, 1726.

† The entertainments of Dublin society seem to have been apportioned with a certain regularity. The dinners at the Deanery took place on Sundays: and Thursdays were the regular nights on which Dr. Helsham and Dr. Delany entertained at Delville. See Mrs. Delany's Autobiography.

‡ Character of Mrs. Johnson. See Appendix XI. Born on the 13th of March, $16\frac{8}{8}\frac{2}{1}$, Stella had not completed her forty-sixth year at the time of her death.

Following the custom of the time, the funeral took place late at night: and from the situation of the grave, near the southern door of the Cathedral, the lights of the attendants at the last ceremony gleamed through the window opposite the Deanery. Swift, though he had her body placed where her ashes might one day lie side by side with his own,* was too ill to be present at the funeral, and could not bear even the ordeal of seeing the lights which told of the work going on within the Church. They "removed him into another apartment," that he might not see the gleam that lighted that grave in which was laid the long and faithful devotion of a lifetime, and in whose silence reposes that secret of Swift's life which, whether for compassion or for indignant blame, has roused so much of human interest.†

Henceforward he must strive and suffer alone. The tenderness, of which his attachment to Stella had been the strongest symptom, deeply as it had struck its roots into his nature, withered into cynicism. But a lock of Stella's hair is said to have been found in Swift's desk, when his own fight was ended, and on the paper in which it was wrapt were written words that have become proverbial for the burden of pathos that their forced brevity seems to hide—"Only a woman's hair." To comment on them, would be inept and futile: it is for each reader to read his own meaning into them. But can they cover only the cold sneer of heartless cynicism? Was it cynicism that conjured up in his loneliness the ghosts of the love, and tenderness, and devotion, that had come like rays of light across the tragedy of his life? Was it a sneer that prompted the passionate confession of helplessness to utter all the meaning that lay in that little lock of hair?

Lonely, suffering, and comfortless, in the great Deanery house, that seemed a type of the gloom that lay before him,

* Quite recently a fresh excavation in the Cathedral revealed a coffin which contained the bones both of the Dean and Stella.

† The epitaph on the tablet, which now hangs near that of Swift, is poor, and the work of an unknown hand later than Swift's day.

Swift felt with morbid bitterness, the blank that had fallen on his life. All that was good was leaving him: his interests were dying out: his letters are filled with reflections on himself: his hatred of those amongst whom his lot was cast, became more and more irrepressible, although he admits how unreasonable it was. All his harshness, all his prejudices, all his impatience of contradiction, all his love of money, increased tenfold. But crushed, as we know he was, Swift seems to have shown but little of his inner feelings to the world. Throughout his life he bore his burdens with much secrecy. He allowed his friends to speak of that malady that filled him with such ghastly forebodings, in the tone of light comment, that suited their own passing ailments. Dark as his future was to himself, he did not show its full gloom to his friends. He still amused himself with their affairs: he still sought to have a bright place in their regard: he continued, even, to give hopes of coming back to them some day: and meanwhile he affected an interest in the success of the literary schemes on which they were busy, and from which they were gathering new renown.

For himself, he turns again, with some concentration, to the work of an Irish patriot. The Drapier letters had achieved for him a position of commanding authority: he had now to drive that authority home.

Both the evils and the proposed remedies had reached a new development since we glanced at them in the years that preceded the Drapier's letters. Few, even amongst the narrow clique that ruled her, doubted that the state of Ireland was utterly wrong, and called imperiously for a remedy: and we have already seen how the need of reform had been urged even before the Drapier's Letters appeared. These letters had lifted the struggle on to a new platform; but they had been only the beginning of the later struggle. Bold assertions of Ireland's independence had been made: one victory, at least, over the tyranny of the official clique had been won. It remained to

guide that victory in the right direction, and to show its effects all along the line.

Others than Swift saw the evils and brought forward proposals of reform. Foremost amongst these was Viscount Molesworth, who, in 1723, had discussed the radical ills of Ireland drastically enough.* The "whole economy of agriculture," he says, "is neglected." He sees the first blot in the land system, in the rack-renting, which made it impossible for the tenant to improve, knowing as he did, that every penny laid out on the land was not only lost, but would ultimately go to increase his rent, or the fine for renewal of his lease, when the lease expired. Not venturing to appeal to the stringent remedy of law, he would bring a powerful public opinion to tell upon an unreasonable landlord. "If," he says, "a landlord turns out a good, old, improving tenant, let him suffer under the obloquy of his country."† He denounces the conduct of the landlords in destroying roads; in taking advantage of the disabilities of Roman Catholic tenants: in failing to make themselves, in any way, the guides or leaders of the classes dependent on them. But for the tenants, too, he has reforms to propose. Large farms of three or four hundred acres were commonly taken by the tenants only from motives of a mistaken pride; and, unable to stock or work them, the tenants sublet to others lower than themselves—those "cottagers," whose rent was drained from their life's blood, and who could keep themselves alive only by being thieves or the harbourers of thieves. Hence had arisen those curses of the land, the land-jobbers, who ground the tenants more hardly than the landlords themselves. The holdings, Lord Molesworth maintains, must be strictly limited; they must be for definite terms; and all subletting must be forbidden. He would extend still further a sort of paternal government. Instead of hunting

* *Some Considerations for the Promoting of Agriculture and Employing the Poor*, by R(obert) L(ord) V(iscount) M(olesworth), 1723.

† It is curious to note, in this proposal of Viscount Molesworth, the germs of a custom which has so developed in our own day, as to have acquired a name which will puzzle future etymologists.

down the Roman Catholic priest, and compelling him to subsist on precarious alms extorted from a starving peasantry, he boldly proposes that government should undertake the payment of the priests, and thus provide for their loyalty more surely than by a hundred penal acts. He would establish a school of agriculture in each county: and would teach the rudiments of the art to children instead of their primer. The custom of gleaning, or "leasing," as it was called, had spread so far as to be a real burden on the farmer, who found one-tenth or more of his crops carried off by the hordes of thieving mendicants, who plundered before his eyes, and who were only to be driven away by main force. They were a pest, like that of the Egyptian locusts, and their idle sorning called for the severe action of the law. The too numerous holidays of the Roman Catholic church, must be limited. The crowds of hedgers and vagabonds must be shipped off by compulsory emigration. Fisheries must be fostered: all restrictive monopolies removed: and encouragement given to Irish trade. And finally, parliamentary representation must be improved by giving the suffrage to the leaseholders, instead of confining it to the freeholders, who were often men of inferior wealth and station.

The tract of Lord Molesworth was answered by one who bore more hardly on the landlords, and stated with greater energy of invective the sufferings of the tenants.* Others took a lower tone. They spoke with bated breath, and with humble apology, of the wrongs of Ireland. They found the sole hope of remedy in proving that her weal might benefit England, and craved for her the liberty to exist, because her existence might be good for the mother country. But Lord Molesworth's lead was followed by others of a better type, and amongst these were Thomas Prior, the author of the *List of Absentees*, and Arthur Dobbs, who wrote an *Essay on the Trade of Ireland*, in 1729.

The specific which the latter urges above all, is to create a

* *Considerations upon Considerations for promoting of Agriculture.* 1724.

yeomanry by means of fixed tenures. "Would the landlords," he says, "fix the tenures and possessions of their tenants upon a lasting and certain foundation, by leases of lives renewable or fee-farms, I would not doubt to find our people soon become industrious, and frugal to the utmost." He knows that the nobility and gentry will object: but if the land is to be improved, if pauperism is to be checked, if landlords are to be anything else than reckless squireens grinding an uncertain income out of a starving tenantry, if the vampires of middlemen are to be stamped out, thus, and thus only, can it be done. But with fixed tenures imposed on the landlords, he would have restrictions for tenants too. Farms must be neither less than forty, nor more than one hundred and sixty acres. They are not to be divisible. Each is to have but one farmhouse. Subletting is to be illegal. The scheme was bold enough: but it still presupposed a national energy, to rouse which something more than theoretic proposals was needed.

Alongside of these there were a crowd of lesser proposals. Some urged the use of tormentil for bark in tanning, so as to preserve an industry which was dying out for lack of timber.* Others urged the use of Kilkenny coal, so as to stop the importation from Whitehaven.† Others again urged the establishment of "Lombards" or money-lending offices, secured by the public credit, and under government inspection. All these schemes showed rather the ferment in men's minds, than the existence of any settled plan of reform, or any confidence in the resources of national energy and independence.

In all those appeals for reform, one thing must not be forgotten. They were spoken, not from the heart of Ireland, but from those who were in great measure mere outsiders. The mass of the Roman Catholic population was slipping, past all hope of reclamation, out of the hands of the ruling class. Here and there, moderate schemes of toleration were

* *The method of Tanning without bark.* Dublin, 1729.

† *The case of many thousand poor inhabitants of Dublin.* Dublin, 1729.

proposed*, which might enlist the sympathies and loyalty of Roman Catholics. But such proposals were rare: and for the most part, the dense mass behind the smaller divisions, and sects, and parties of the English minority, is unheeded and unknown, except by the few, like Swift, whose view reached out beyond the little intricacies of party struggles, into the darkness beyond.

On almost every one of the proposals that we have mentioned, Swift had something to say. By the Drapier's letters he had roused a feeling that all the other reformers together could not have kindled. Theories, and nostrums, and fancied remedies were all well in their way: Swift had given the one thing needful in the motive power that had galvanized into life the dead national feeling; and this new energy it was his object to keep alive.

Swift's tracts themselves best explain their purpose. In one bearing the title, *An answer to a paper called a Memorial of the poor inhabitants, tradesmen, and labourers of the Kingdom of Ireland*,† he states broadly the evils which had their foundation in the very necessity of things. What now meets his view, is—

"The fair issue of things begun upon party rage, while some sacrificed the public to fury, and others to ambition: while a spirit of faction and oppression reigned in every part of the country, where gentlemen, instead of consulting the ease of their tenants, or cultivating their lands, were worrying one another upon points of Whig and Tory, of High Church and Low Church: which no more concerned them than the long and famous controversy of strops for razors: while agriculture was wholly discouraged, and consequently half the farmers and labourers, and poorer tradesmen,

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* As by Edward Synge, who as Prebendary of St. Patrick's preached a sermon in October, 1725, (on the anniversary of the Irish Rebellion) urging a modified toleration, as a step towards proselytizing.

† In Scott's edition, which is more faulty in regard to these Irish pamphlets then in almost any other point, this is dated 1738; instead of 1728. The date is correct in the Dublin edition of 1735: and it is further proved by the reference, which the *Answer* contains, to the "lately produced" paper on *The State of Ireland*, which was printed in 1727.

forced to beggary or banishment. 'Wisdom crieth in the streets: Because I have called on you: I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded: but ye have set at nought all my counsels, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.'"

With these words he casts aside their puny theories: "I have done with your memorial," * he says, "you have spoken as a stranger, and as of a country which is left at liberty to enjoy the benefits of nature, and to make the best of those advantages which God has given it, in soil, climate and situation."

On such an assumption they cannot but be wrong, for no such privilege belongs to Ireland: it is not hers to enjoy the "benefits of nature." Only utter ignorance could have assumed it: and on the ground that this privilege is denied her, Swift takes up the battle in her name.

With absolute calmness of logic, but with unrelenting force of sarcasm, he lays bare her wrongs. There is no mincing of matters: no softening of the stern reality. "Every squire, almost to a man, is an oppressor of the clergy, a racker of his tenants, a jobber of all public works, very proud, and generally illiterate." Thus he begins a page of description: and it may be taken as a specimen of his tone. The absentees are not only wrong: he absolutely overwhelms in sarcasm their craven abnegation of their birthright, their servile imitation of English fashions. They go to England, "to be preceded by thousands, and neglected by millions." No hope, then, may be looked for from the landed gentry. But still, slaves as we Irish are, we may stand together. "Nature has instructed even a brood of goslings to stick together, while the Kite is

* The memorial was written by John Browne, who turns up in various guises in all these Irish disputes: and the confusion into which the editor, who acted in Scott's name, has fallen, is nowhere more conspicuous than here. First came the memorial: then Swift's answer printed by Scott: then, lastly, the apology of Browne, which Scott prints before Swift's answer to the Memorial, although it is dated ten days after, and is intelligible only as a reply to Swift.

hovering over their heads." Ireland must be her own Saviour and must work out her own redemption. Let us only have the brute instinct, to be true to our own kind.

Swift's insistance on Irish grievances was neither that of the political agitator, nor that of the theorist, who entered into the details of possible improvements. His purpose was too sincere, his knowledge of Irish wrongs too real, to allow him to become an agitator; his sarcasm was too fierce, to allow him to become a theoretical reformer. What strikes us most in all these tracts is the deliberate incisiveness of their irony, the despairing bitterness that gives them finish and completeness. In another tract, published as early as 1724,* he shows, one by one, how the ordinary rules that guide us in regard to other nations are utterly fallacious when applied to Ireland. In a third,† he catalogues in regular order the possible adjuncts and conditions of prosperity and shows how the very negative of each is present in Ireland. "If we flourish, it is against every law of nature and of reason: like the thorn of Glastonbury, which blossoms in the midst of winter." He draws a fanciful picture of what Ireland might seem to a stranger, favoured as she is by nature: but he breaks from it in despair.

"My heart is too heavy to continue this irony longer: for it is manifest, that whatever stranger took such a journey, would be apt to think himself travelling in Lapland or Iceland, rather than in a country so favoured by nature as ours, both in fruitfulness of soil, and temperature of climate. The miserable dens, and diet, and dwelling of the people: the general desolation in most parts of the Kingdom: the old seats of the nobility and gentry all in ruins, and no new ones in their stead: the families of farmers, who pay great rents, living in filth and nastiness upon butter-milk and potatoes, without a shoe or stocking to their feet, or a house as convenient as an English hogsty, to receive them. These may indeed be comfortable sights to an English spectator, who comes for a short time, only to learn the language, and returns back to his own country, whither he finds all his wealth transmitted. *Nostra miseria magna est.*"

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* *Maxims controlled in Ireland.* In modern language, this might well have been entitled, "The theories of political economy proved to have no application to Ireland."

† *A short View of the State of Ireland* 1727.

Nothing shows Swift's genius in these Irish tracts more conclusively than the marvellously simple materials with which he maintains their force. He enters into the questions with no intricacy, he treats them with no variety of view. Setting aside all those tracts which careful scrutiny shows to be falsely ascribed to Swift, it is surprising how small is the range amongst the rest.* They have all one end and one aim: "Be independent." Law cannot help: theory is futile: English selfishness has left us little. But if we can gain anything we can gain it by self-assertion, and by that alone. Swift is quite well acquainted with the current nostrums. He names almost all of them. He speaks of Prior with approbation.† He deals out a patronizing nod to this or that scheme. But he never lingers long over any one. He saw that the evil lay deeper, and that it could be cured only by giving to Ireland the motive power of independence, by kindling her energy through withering sarcasm, derisive scorn, and fiercest indignation. The sarcasm and the indignation are for the English selfishness: the scorn for Irish imbecility and weakness. He repeats over and over again the same advice. "Quit yourselves like men, be strong. Curb your follies, and resist the fantastic taste for foreign luxuries. Know that your strength is in the plough and not in the depopulated pasture lands." "Ajax was mad, when he mistook a flock of sheep for his enemies: but we shall never be sober until we have the same way of thinking."

Perhaps the greatest, certainly the most characteristic, of Swift's efforts in this direction, is his "*Modest Proposal for pre-*

* This is a matter which could be fully dealt with only in re-editing the works. But again it must be pointed out, that we should err widely in accepting all the tracts as genuine which Scott's edition attributes to Swift. The descriptive notes, which preface the tracts in that edition, are frequently contradicted by the tracts themselves. On the authority of that odd pedant, Dr. Barrett, tracts are accepted by Scott's amanuensis, which are often inconsistent with Swift's views, feeble travesties of his style, and which scarcely pretend even to imitate his wit.

† *Proposal that the Ladies wear Irish Manufactures.* See Scott's Swift, (2nd edit.) vol. VII. p. 260.

venting the Children of Poor People in Ireland from being a burden to their Parents or the Country." It was published in 1729, when, even from Archbishop Boulter's letters, we learn that people were starving in hundreds through the famine, and that the dead were left unburied before their own doors. English civilization was shamed by the sight, and to Swift at least it seemed no moment to be silent. His sarcasm was never applied with more deadly seriousness of purpose. With the grave and decent self-respect of a reformer, who knows the value of the proposal he has to make, Swift propounds his scheme. There is no strain in the language with which the state of matters is described: but the very simplicity and matter-of-fact tone that are assumed, make the description all the more telling. Of a million and a half inhabitants, about two hundred thousand may be the number of those who are bringing children into the world: of these about thirty thousand can provide for their children. There remain one hundred and seventy thousand whose case has to be met: and the pamphlet assumes as an admitted truth, that no method yet proposed can meet that case. Agriculture and handicrafts, we have not: and though stealing offers an employment, yet complete proficiency in that calling is not often attained under the age of six. What then has to be done?

With the calm deliberation of a statistician calculating the food supply of the country, Swift brings forward his suggestion. He has inquired into the facts: and finds that a well-grown child of a year old, is a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled: and he makes no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout. The charge for nourishing such a child, in the present scale, will be about two shillings per annum, "rags included:" and "he believes no gentleman will repine to give ten shillings for the carcase of a good fat child." The mother will have eight shillings net profit.

In the same tone, he dilates upon the advantages of the

scheme. Refinements have been suggested to him. The flesh of young lads and maidens, too, might, it is thought, be put to the same use. But with all respect, he sees difficulties: and chiefly because "some scrupulous persons might be apt to censure such a practice (though indeed very unjustly) as a little bordering upon cruelty: which, I confess, has always been with me the strongest objection against any project, how well soever intended." As he concludes with an earnest, but modest enforcement of his scheme, he is careful to add that he has no personal motive; his own children are all past the age when he could make a profit of them.

No work of Swift's has been more canvassed: none more variously estimated: and none more grievously misunderstood. Some have esteemed it a heartless piece of ridicule, a callous laugh raised out of abject misery. Men who might have been expected to see more clearly, have shuddered in well-simulated horror, at a cynicism which they have found too strong for their nerves. So to interpret it, is to misread it as entirely as the Frenchman did, who took it as a grave and practical suggestion, and who fancied that Swift in sober earnest proposed that infants in Ireland should be used for food. In truth, the ridicule is but a thin disguise. From beginning to end, it is laden with grave and torturing bitterness. Each touch of calm and ghastly humour, is added with the gravity of the surgeon who probes a wound to the quick. Swift's clearness of vision laid the woes of Ireland bare to him; he has left them on record for all time. Molesworth, and Dobbs, and Prior, and Browne, are all forgotten: can England ever forget what lies on her conscience, while Swift's *Modest Proposal* continues to be read?

Alongside of the *Modest Proposal* we may read another tract which has much the same character, though with application more restricted. In 1730, the *Craftsman* had made some strong remarks on the facilities recently given for the recruiting of the French army in Ireland. The incident, as we

see from Archbishop Boulter's letters,* had caused some alarm amongst the Government adherents, who found their own transaction wearing an untoward aspect. The *Craftsman* had seized the opportunity: and Swift, whose sympathies were with the *Craftsman*, added to the agitation by his ironical reply. "Why hinder the recruiting?" he asks, in all simplicity. "Do you not know how the loss of these recruits will benefit Ireland? Elsewhere, no doubt, men are the sinews of a nation: but this is a maxim 'controlled' in Ireland. What we want is depopulation. Make Ireland a desert, and all will be well. Have a grazier and his family for every 2000 acres, and then we shall be as England wishes us to be. If the army is idle, let it find employment in gathering taxes. If we still need more depletion, take our surplus to the colonies and employ them as a screen between his Majesty's subjects and their savage neighbours. When our island is a desert, we will send all our raw material to England, and receive from her all our manufactured articles. A leather coinage will be all we want, separated, as we shall then be, from all human kind. We shall have lost all: but we may be left in peace, as we shall have no more to tempt the plunderer." The *Modest Proposal* has had thousands of readers for one that this *Answer to the Craftsman* has had. The former needs no such knowledge of Irish affairs for its apprehension: but, special as is its object, the irony of the *Answer* is as perfect in its way.

With one or two other leaders of what was so far a National Party in Ireland, Swift became an oracle in all matters affecting the public weal. Whatever differences might before have divided them, Swift and Archbishop King were now entirely united as Irish patriots.† Disputes and perplexities were sub-

* See Boulter's *Letters*, vol. II. p. 30.

† King's bitterness, in his old age, was almost equal to that of Swift himself. Burdy, in his *Life of Skelton*, tells a story of King, which shows how he regarded the Irish authorities. A young nobleman, who had just taken his degree, was brought to be introduced to the Archbishop, who sat propt up with pillows. "One piece of advice I have to give you, my Lord," said he:

mitted to their decision, and to Swift, above all, an unstinted reverence was paid. A reference to some incidents in which he is concerned, may help to give us an idea of the position that he held in these later years. In 1729, he received the freedom of the City from the Corporation. Permanently settled in Ireland for life, he began to accept, with a pretence of gratification, the homage of praise so lavishly offered to him. The days of prosecution were ended: but instead, the snarling of opponents fretted him, and he seems to have resolved, by the acceptance of proffered honour, and by ostensibly assuming the place which general report assigned to him as Irish Patriot, to check their backbiting and slanders. The freedom of the city was an honour conferred rarely, and only on men high in place and power: in the case of Swift, it was the spontaneous offering of Ireland to the Drapier. In his speech of thanks* he accepted the authorship of the Drapier's Letters. He shewed in what he claimed to have deserved well of the State. He repudiated with indignation the assertion that he was a Jacobite, or false to the Protestant succession, although he claimed the right, "with many wise and good men," to dislike some things in the public proceedings in both kingdoms. An ill-advised and crack-brained Irish peer, named Lord Allen, who had sought Swift's friendship in and out of season, had been rash enough to upbraid the Corporation with their treasonable extravagance, in conferring such an honour on the enemy of King George. This gave Swift the opportunity he desired. In a public advertisement he gave the lie to Lord Allen: he held him up to public indignation in the speech of thanks: and not content with this, he gibbets him to an unenviable immortality, as "Traulus." He invents for him the excuse of madness,

"be as unlike the rest of the Lords of Ireland as you can, and you'll do very well." (Burdy's *Life of Skelton:* Works, Vol. I. p. 118).

* See *The substance of what was said by the Dean of St. Patrick's to the Lord Mayor and some of the Aldermen of the city of Dublin, when his Lordship came to present the said Dean with his freedom in a gold box.* (Scott's Swift, Vol. VII. p. 275.)

but only to disallow its sufficiency to cover his misdeeds. His madness is "but the pimp to his vices."

"Positive and overbearing,
Changing still, and still adhering:
Spiteful, peevish, rude, untoward,
Fierce in tongue, in heart a coward;
Reputation ever tearing,
Ever dearest friendship swearing:
Judgment weak and passion strong,
Always various, always wrong;
Provocation never waits,
Where he loves, or where he hates:
Talks whatever comes in his head:
Wishes it were all unsaid."

He traces other vices from his father's line:

"Hence the mean and sordid soul
Like his body, rank and foul:
Hence that wild suspicious peep
Like a rogue that steals a sheep:
Hence he learnt the butcher's guile,
How to cut your throat and smile:
Like a butcher, doomed for life,
In his mouth to wear a knife:
Hence he draws his daily food,
From his tenants' vital blood."

Six years later, Swift uttered a few words in public, which have come down to us, and which show us how he viewed Irish affairs, when the struggle was passing from his hands, and when, in old age and decrepitude, he was forced to give it up to others. On the 24th of April, 1736, an assembly of merchants met at the Guildhall to draw up a petition to the Lord Lieutenant on the lowering of the coin: and Swift addressed them in the following words:*

* The speech is referred to in a Letter from Mrs. Whiteway to Dr. Sheridan, of the same day, telling how the Drapier had been to a meeting and made a long speech, "for which he will be reckoned a Jacobite." It is also referred to in the *Advice to the freemen of Dublin* (Scott's Swift, Vol. VII. p. 364); but it has not been printed in any edition of Swift's works. I was fortunate enough to find it on the fly-leaf of one of the Tracts bound in Vol. 126 of the Collection in the Royal Irish Academy.

"GENTLEMEN,

"I beg you will consider and very well weigh in your hearts what I am going to say and what I have often said before. There are several bodies of men, among whom the power of this kingdom is divided—1st, The Lord Lieutenant, Lords Justices and Council, next to these, my Lords the Bishops; there is likewise my Lord Chancellor, and my Lords the Judges of the Land—with other eminent persons in the land, who have employments and great salaries annexed. To these must be added the Commissioners of the Revenue, with all their under officers: and lastly, their honours of the Army, of all degrees.

"Now, Gentlemen, I beg you again to consider that none of these persons above named, can ever suffer the loss of one farthing by all the miseries under which the kingdom groans at present. For, first, until the kingdom be entirely ruined, the Lord Lieutenant and Lords Justices must have their salaries. My Lords the Bishops, whose lands are set at a fourth part value, will be sure of their rents and their fines. My Lords the Judges and those of other employments in the country must likewise have their salaries. The gentlemen of the revenue will pay themselves; and as to the officers of the army, the consequence of not paying them is obvious enough. Nay, so far will those persons I have already mentioned be from suffering, that, on the contrary, their revenues being no way lessened by the fall of money, and the price of all commodities considerably sunk thereby, they must be great gainers. Therefore, Gentlemen, I do entreat you that as long as you live, you will look on all persons who are for lowering the gold, or any other coin, as no friends to this poor kingdom, but such, who find their private account in what will be most detrimental to Ireland. And as the absentees are, in the strongest view, our greatest enemies, first by consuming above one-half of the rents of this nation abroad, and secondly by turning the weight, by their absence, so much on the Popish side, by weakening the Protestant interest, can there be a greater folly than to pave a bridge of gold at your own expense, to support them in their luxury and vanity abroad, while hundreds of thousands are starving at home for want of employment."*

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* The occasion of the agitation in which Swift thus took part was an intention on the part of Archbishop Boulter to take steps for the lowering of the gold coin. The speech was uttered in anticipation of the proclamation, and Swift was accused by the Archbishop of being the author of the popular excitement, and was threatened perhaps with the displeasure of the Government. "If I were but to lift my finger," the Dean is reported to have answered, "they would tear you to pieces." When the order was actually given, Swift showed his anger by hoisting a black flag over the Cathedral. (Boulter's *Letters*, Vol. II. p. 246). Side by side with this there was a new introduction of £2000 worth of copper coin, which, trifling as was the amount, served to rouse Swift's old indignation from its

Only a few days later, Swift published one of the last, if not the very last, of his tracts on Irish politics. It was an *Advice to the Freemen of Dublin in the choice of a Member to represent them in Parliament.* He urges upon them the absolute necessity of choosing their own Lord Mayor, in preference to another candidate, who held office under the Government. No one, he says, who holds such office can be independent. Is he to displease those to whose good will he owes his bread? "Believe me," says Swift, "these are not times to expect such an exalted degree of virtue from mortal men. Blazing stars are much more frequently seen than such heroical virtues." "Count upon it as a truth next to your creed, that no one person in office, of which he is master for life, whether born here or in England, will ever hazard that office for the good of his country." Swift speaks as a sort of civic Nestor: and whatever hopes of conciliation there may once have been between him and Walpole, these last words are a plain trumpet-note of defiance to those who made themselves the tools of Walpole's Irish policy.

Such are specimens of Swift's work in Irish politics. Doubtless he began with little thought of Ireland, impelled by a hatred for the Whig domination, by his own exclusion from the scenes he cared for, by the disappointment that soured himself, and by the cloud that weighed upon his friends. But he kindled to the work as it went on. The luxury of moving masses of men roused the only appetite that was very strong in Swift. The reality of Irish wrongs became more vivid to him, and his honest indignation more intense. His claims, indeed, were for the English born in Ireland as against the freshly

likeness to the famous patent of Wood. There was little reason in his protest. Indeed, he avows to Lord Orrery (MS. Letter, 31st March, 1737), "I quarrel not with the coin, but with the indignity of its not being coined here." Strange to say, Faulkner, who had published a protest from Swift, was summoned before the Council: and Swift himself thought he had so much cause to fear prosecution, that he sent away his papers (same MS. Letter). The alarm was probably due to the nervousness of old age and ill-health.

imported emissaries of Walpole; and not for the native Irish themselves. But in spite of the narrow standpoint of his time, Swift reached out farther, and he could not be blind to the misery of the Irish Catholics. "*Nostra miseria magna est:*" simple and full of meaning as the words are, they derive their force chiefly from the thought, not of comparatively well-to-do English settlers who failed to gain Government posts, but of starving Irish, to whom were denied the very rights of men.

But the freedom and privileges of his Church: its independence of Bishops who were little else than paid political agents of Walpole: the maintenance of its property against the selfish encroachments of the greedy Irish squirearchy—these, too, were objects which lay close to Swift's heart, and seemed to him a part of the fight against Irish wrongs.

In 1731 two Bills were brought forward relating to the Church, one enforcing residence on the clergy, along with the burden of building houses: the other intended to promote the subdividing of large benefices. Swift was unsparing in his denunciation of both, as directly planned to degrade and pauperize the clergy. He poured out his satire upon the Bishops who supported them, who felt not for the first time the lash of his sarcasm.* Writing to Bishop Sterne, in July 1733, when the Bills were already things of the past, Swift speaks of them as "two abominable Bills, for enslaving and beggaring the clergy, which took their birth from Hell." "I call God to witness," he goes on, "that I did then and do now, and shall for ever firmly believe, that every bishop who gave his vote for either of these Bills, did it with no other view, bating farther

* His description of the Irish Bishops of Walpole's making has become almost hackneyed. "Excellent and moral men have been selected on every occasion of vacancy. But it unfortunately has uniformly happened, that as these worthy divines crossed Hounslow Heath on their way to Ireland to take possession of their bishoprics, they have been regularly robbed and murdered by the highwaymen frequenting that common, who seized upon their robes and patents, came over to Ireland, and are consequently bishops in their stead."

promotion, than a premeditated design, from the spirit of ambition and love of arbitrary power, to make the whole body of the clergy their slaves and vassals till the day of judgment, under the load of poverty and contempt." If there is anything else involved in the Bills, it is, in Swift's view, a desire to give an impulse to the Sectaries.

Other Bills roused Swift's indignation on behalf of his Church, not against the Bishops, but against the landowners of Ireland. That the latter acted with selfishness and extortion, in order to supply themselves with means of riotous waste, there can be no doubt: and what they could not obtain from their tenants, they sought to grind from the Church. By a Bill of 1733, it was proposed to change the tithe on hemp, for a fixed payment, or *Modus*, as it was called, of less value: and Swift entered the lists against it so effectively, that the Bill was lost. In 1736, another Bill, even more directly aimed by the landowners at the property of the Church, sought to get rid of the tithe of agistment, or the payment which was due to the clergy on pasture land. It had been long the subject of law-suits, which had uniformly been decided for the clergy: but in 1737, the House of Commons, composed in large measure of landowners, attempted to set aside the tithe by a resolution of their own. It was in answer to this attempt that Swift wrote the last, but most withering of all his poetic satires, *The Legion Club*. His fury bursts all bounds in the storm of abuse and ridicule and utter scorn that he pours upon the august assembly, that met

> "In the building large and lofty
> Scarce a bowshot from the college,
> Half the Globe from sense and knowledge."

As each image is exhausted a new one is brought on: and so vivid is the imaginative power of his descriptions, that, as we read, we seem to see the gibbering of the madmen, twisting their straws, tugging at their chains, and making the place hideous with their foul and loathsome bestialities. So fierce

is the indignation, so unsparing its expression, that we may well believe what is told us by Lord Orrery* of its results upon the author. "In the year 1736," says Lord Orrery, "I remember him seized with a violent fit of giddiness. He was at that time writing the * * * *Legion Club*, but he found the effects of the giddiness so dreadful, that he left the poem unfinished." His old enemies were coming in greater force: and the last scene of his life was begun.†

One other topic must be touched on before we leave the last chapter of Swift's public work. During all these years, distant as he was from the arena, he never lost sight of the battle of English politics. Every step which confirmed Walpole's power, which made the Whig supremacy seem more firmly founded, caused new hopelessness in Swift. But he refused to consider his opposition to Walpole and the Whigs to be merely that of the partisan. He claimed to base his resistance on his hatred of corruption, on his love of liberty, on his desire to see the constitution resting once more on what he called "the Gothic institution of limited monarchy," with the bulwarks of popular support, and of virtue, for its defence. It was the same theory that furnished Bolingbroke with the specious maxims of his Patriot King, and which inspired the eloquence of Pulteney. The opposition, to which all Swift's friends belonged, were, or

* Remarks, Letter XXI. Though Lord Orrery speaks of this as a matter of his own recollection, it appears he got the information from Deane Swift. It is given by him in a letter to Lord Orrery of 23rd March, 1750 (Lord Cork's MSS.). The sentences that follow in Orrery's narrative are taken from the letter.

† It is worth noticing in connexion with Swift's later efforts for his Church, that Skelton's anonymous tract, with the title "*Some Proposals for the Revival of Christianity*," published in 1736, was ascribed to Swift. It is rather a ponderous imitation of Swift's ironical style: and we are told that when the tract was brought to Swift, his only remark was, "The author of this has not continued the irony to the end." (Burdy's *Life of Skelton*: Works, Vol. I. p. 42.) Of Skelton's efforts in that kind of literature, his own unique biographer is compelled to say, "His attempts at wit are certainly laudable, but not so successful as I could wish."

claimed to be, the maintainers of national virtue, the resisters of corruption, the defenders of liberty against arbitrary rule. The plea was a specious one: and, apart from the somewhat palpable insincerity of such maxims in the mouth of Bolingbroke, the political theory was one admirably fitted to prevail, as it did ultimately prevail, against the selfish narrowness of the Whig aristocracy. It is more than likely that Swift may have suggested, during his last visit to London, some of the lines on which Bolingbroke and Pulteney worked.* But

* This finds some confirmation, from the following heads of a Tract, which I have found in a memorandum in Swift's handwriting. The memorandum belongs to Mr. Frederick Locker, who kindly permitted me to use his papers, which are those which came from Theophilus Swift into Scott's possession. But the interest of this memorandum escaped Scott's notice.

"Proposal for Virtue."

"Every little fellow who has a vote now corrupted.

An arithmetical computation, how much spent in election of Commons, and pensions and foreign courts: how then can our debts be paid?

No fear that gentlemen will not stand and serve without Pensions, and that they will let the Kingdom be invaded for want of fleets and armies, or bring in Pretender &c.

How K(ing) will ensure his own interest as well as the Publick: he is now forced to keep himself bare &c., at least, late King was.

Perpetual expedients, stop gaps, &c., at long run must terminate in something fatal, as it does in private estates.

There may be probably 10,000 landed men in England fit for Parliament. This would reduce parliament to consist of real landed men, which is full as necessary for Senates as for Juries. What do the other 9000 do for want of pensions?

* * * In private life, virtue may be difficult, by passions, infirmities, temptations, want of pence, strong opposition &c. But not in public administration: there it makes all things easy.

Form the Scheme. Suppose a King of England would resolve to give no pension for party &c., and call a Parliament, perfectly free, as he could.

What can a K. reasonably ask that a Parliament will refuse? When they are resty, it is by corrupt ministers, who have designs dangerous to the State, and must therefore support themselves by bribing &c.

Open, fair dealing the best.

A contemptuous character of Court art. How different from true politics. For, comparing the talents of two professions that are very different, I cannot but think, that in the present sense of the word Politician, a common sharper or pickpocket, has every quality that can be required in the other, and accordingly I have personally known more than half a dozen in their hour esteemed equally to excell in both."

These notes are interesting, both as shewing from whom Bolingbroke and Pulteney may have drawn some of their topics, and as giving us a type of Swift's method of laying down the outline of what he meant to write.

however this may be, most certainly Swift humoured the pretences of his friends. He never writes to Pulteney, without reminding him of the prevailing corruption, and the hopes that are centred in him, as the saviour of the country. He, and he alone "has preserved the spirit of liberty." He has "resisted the corruption of politics." He is the "*Ultimus Britannorum:*" and he is the "chief support of liberty to his country." The same tone is kept up to Bolingbroke and Pope: they are the narrow band who are to storm the citadel of corruption, which a too powerful Minister has built. The pretence was perhaps all the more specious to Swift, on account of his distance from the scene, and the glamour which that distance threw over the professions of political virtue made by his friends.

CHAPTER XVI.

PERSONAL LIFE AND SURROUNDINGS OF THESE YEARS.

1727—1737.

ÆTAT. 60—70.

The inner side of Swift's Life—His summer excursions throughout Ireland—Gaulstown—Quilca—Market-hill—Dublin under Carteret—His Tory leanings and Swift's *Vindication* of his action—Carteret's recall—The Duke of Dorset—Swift's increasing gloom—His money cares—Wide influence—Cathedral administration—Badges to beggars—Loans to Tradesmen—His intimates—Sheridan—Helsham—Delany—Ford—Faulkner—Friends at Howth—Bindon's portrait—Dublin foes—Provost Baldwin—Ambrose Philips—Arbuckle—Amory—His claim to Swift's acquaintance—Learned Ladies—Mrs. Sican—Mrs. Grierson—Mrs. Barber—Other literary aspirants—William Dunkin—Matthew Pilkington and his wife—Mrs. Pendarves—The link of association between her and Swift—The Schomberg monument—Bettesworth and his threats—Bishop Hort and Faulkner—Increasing depression—Friendship for Lord Orrery—Anxiety about his will—Its provisions, and the later changes in these—End of Swift's work—"Years and ill-health have got possession of me."

THE active part which Swift played in the Irish controversies of the first decade of George the Second's reign, does not by any means complete the story of his life during these years. Over and above this there are personal incidents which stand out with more distinctness now that he is living full in the eyes of men, with the main portion of his life behind him. Any difficulty in following this part of his career cannot at least arise from want of material, which crowds upon us with almost embarrassing profusion. When we have attempted its arrangement, there is still another aspect in which we must consider him during these years—that of the busy correspondent, alive to most of what was stirring the English capital, and

affecting the literary circles there with something more than a memory of the past.

During the years that had passed since Swift broke from retirement, and began his work as Irish patriot, he had not only been extending his influence in Ireland, but his acquaintance with the country. In 1721 and 1722 he had spent some time with the Rochforts at Gaulstown.* In 1723, after Vanessa's death, when he sought escape from remorse and scandal in absence from his usual haunts, he had travelled for a time in the South of Ireland. Even the western wildnesses of Connaught were not unknown to him.†

Most of the summers of 1724 and 1725, he spent at Quilca, the quiet country retreat which Dr. Sheridan had made for himself in a bleak spot amongst the wildest of the Cavan heaths. It stood close to a little lake, and the care of its proprietor is still visible in the splendid avenues of trees which compass it, even in its decay. Round it have clung many traditions of its owner, of Swift, and of their amusements. The stretch along which Sheridan was wont, as it is said, to attempt a revival of the Roman chariot races: the slope close by the lake which he used for a theatre: the seat in the garden where Swift's arbour stood: the lake itself where Sheridan is said to have constructed an impromptu island out of osier twigs and turf to astonish Swift —all these have their place in the stories that haunt the neighbourhood, with a vitality strange when we consider how completely the surrounding inhabitants are separated from the class for whom Swift wrote and spoke. Not far off is the House of Rantavan, near the Street of Mullagh, the home, in Swift's days, of Henry Brook (the Fool of Quality), and where, according to

* The Rochforts, afterwards ennobled as Lords Kilmaine, held the properties of Gaulstown and Belvidere, stretching along Lough Ennel, within a few miles of Mullingar. Here also the Swift family held considerable property—a part of which still remains in the hands of their descendants. The Rochforts' house stands in a fine situation overlooking the lake, which was the scene of adventures humorously described by Swift in some of his occasional verses.

† *Lady Howth to Swift*, Aug. 6, 1736.

tradition, Brook's mother shewed her superiority to the general fear of the Dean, by meeting Swift on his own ground of sarcasm. The ease and quiet of the place—in spite of poor Sheridan's scolding wife—and the whims and humour of his host, made Swift love Quilca, even though he has perpetuated in verse the memory of its disorder, its dilapidations, and the general shortcomings in which it reflected its owner's character.

Some months after Stella's death, he went to the house of Sir Arthur Acheson, at Market Hill, where he stayed no less than eight months, returning to Dublin only in February $17\frac{2}{2}\frac{9}{8}$. The inmates of Market Hill pleased him—the quiet and indolent ease of Sir Arthur, and still more the readiness of his wife to submit to the caprices of her guest. Political sympathies had begun the intimacy: and Lady Acheson was glad to receive from Swift that instruction and literary guidance which it was always pleasing to him to give. As the friendship ripened Swift shewed more of the capricious whims by which he was wont to display his independence of conventional restraints. He issued his orders for the cutting down of trees, without deigning to wait for the owner's consent. He indulged his taste for composing half humorous, half sarcastic, trifles, on the surroundings of Market Hill: and although these seem to have been taken by his hosts in the spirit their author intended, they got abroad, were exaggerated, and were reported, even amongst Swift's London friends, as violations of the rights of hospitality. The story serves only to shew the malignant curiosity to which Swift was exposed even in regard to his personal intimacies in these later days.* So friendly, indeed, were his relations with the Achesons, that he planned the building of a house for himself in the neighbourhood of Market Hill.

Swift came back to Dublin in February $17\frac{2}{2}\frac{9}{8}$. One presence

* "My Lady shews every mortal the libels I have writ against her:" which proves she did not consider these libels in a very serious light. (*Swift to Sheridan*, September 18, 1728).

that had been more than all others to him was gone: but he still had, both in Dublin and throughout Ireland, friends enough to prevent any outward loneliness. Adverse as he was to Walpole's government, Swift held a position too strong to fear attack. More than this, he had, so long as Lord Carteret continued to be Lord Lieutenant, a friend in high place. In the early days of his Vice-royalty, Carteret had been compelled to take measures against the Drapier. But these measures had failed: the Drapier had defied the government, and the government left him alone. Carteret was free to indulge his own sympathies; and he chose to stand aloof from the keenest of Walpole's partisans, and to associate with men who were reckoned amongst the opposition. His scholarly tastes had attracted him to Sheridan, with whom his evenings were often spent, and at whose house he witnessed the performance of a Greek play by the boys of Sheridan's school. But Sheridan was a Tory: so was Dr. Delany, so was Dr. Stopford, and so, finally, was Swift: yet in the society of all these, this Whig Lord Lieutenant was found to take pleasure. The Whig zealots shook their heads, dreaded a Roman Catholic restoration, and pretended to believe that a Jacobite rising was at hand. Swift undertook the vindication of Lord Carteret.* He shewed that literature and polite tastes and a preference for companionable friends over bores, were frailties, culpable indeed, but yet worthy of mercy: that the Greek tragedy which Lord Carteret had witnessed, was not known to contain any Jacobite principles in disguise: that evenings of social enjoyment, which preserved some tincture of scholarship, opposed as they were to Whiggish notions, might yet be pardoned. The favour shewn to Tories he admits to be great. No doubt benefices of £100 a year had been given to Dr. Sheridan, Dr. Stopford, and Dr. Delany: and a contract worth £11 a year had been given to Sir Arthur Acheson. But, on

* *A Vindication of his Excellency, John, Lord Carteret, from the Charge of favouring none but Tories, High Churchmen, and Jacobites.* 1730.

the other hand, the Whigs were not quite without their rewards. They have had some £10,000 a year in bishoprics, and nearly twice as much more in civil and military commands. Worthy as they are, the Whigs cannot say they have been altogether forgotten.

The *Vindication* turned the laugh against Lord Carteret's assailants. But it availed nothing with Walpole. Carteret had been humiliated: and now, as his patience had not revolted, he must be made to go. In May, 1730, this Lord Lieutenant, who so strangely combined the character of friend of Swift and representative of Walpole, surrendered his post. The change was a serious one for Swift. He had formerly waged a severe struggle with Lord Carteret and his government. But underlying the struggle there had always been a certain sympathy: and as Swift said afterwards, in Carteret he had hated the governor, not the man. When people asked Carteret how he had governed Ireland,—so he wrote at a later day to Swift,—his reply was that he "had pleased Dr. Swift."*

Carteret was succeeded by the Duke of Dorset, and the castle patronage of Swift's circle was over. There was no special ground of jealousy between himself and the new governor, and through the influence of Lady Betty Germaine, the way was opened for friendly relations. In old days the Duke and he had some acquaintance, and though Swift feared that the friendship of the Duke for Lady Allen, the wife of "Traulus," would necessitate a breach with himself, it does not appear that this was the case.† But intimacy or close sympathy was impossible. Dorset came to be a tool in the hands of Boulter; and nothing could reconcile Swift to what tended to increase the Primate's power. Swift, during these years, had a great place in the Dublin world: but it was one cut off from all easy intercourse with the dispensers of patronage and the holders of office. He was thrown back upon

* *Lord Carteret to Swift*, March 24, 173$\frac{7}{8}$.

† *Swift to Pope*, May 2, 1730.

the circle of his own intimates in Dublin and around it, and upon those whom he still held to be his fittest companions, the remaining members of the old group that knew the story of the days of Queen Anne. Some day he still hoped again to see them: meanwhile, he enjoyed their letters—to use his own frequent metaphor—as the usufruct of a capital sunk perhaps for life.

Powerful as he was as the Dictator of Dublin society, as the avowed Censor of the government, and as the disdainful recipient of a homage lavishly yielded to him, Swift was gloomy and morose in spirits; annoyed by petty troubles: and sought relief from the effects of disappointment, ill-health, and misanthropy, in occasional outbursts of almost childish humour. There is no need to dwell on the anecdotes of escapades and practical jokes which have gathered about the name of Swift, and have served to do duty as the biography of these later years.* How he badgered his intimates; how he bullied his servants; how he personified a helpless usher in order to bring down upon himself the pompous contempt of one new to Dublin society, whose dire terror, when he afterwards recognised in the Dean the butt of his sarcasm, gave sport to Swift and his friends; how he domineered in society, and put the timid to the blush: how he went in the disguise of a fiddler to a beggar's wedding, and detected the subterfuges that served to impose on the pity of the charitable—stories of this kind might be endlessly multiplied, were we to draw upon the various reminiscences that have come down to us. It may be questioned, however, if they do not give us a false idea of Swift. Their authority is, at the best, more than doubtful. They often give proof of their own origin in

* Swift's earlier biographers dealt strangely with these anecdotes. They borrowed many, without acknowledgment, from the narrative of poor Mrs. Pilkington, while repudiating her authority: and instead of using them in order to throw light on Swift's character, and to illustrate his life, they were content to throw them together in one unconnected series at the close of their story, taking but little pains to ascertain their truth. Sheridan is good enough to call this the Plutarchian method.

the readiness to attribute to a man of wit all stories that wanted a paternity, and seemed to find a suitable one in being attached to his name. At the most, they shew us that Swift varied his gloom by occasional outbursts of boisterous mirth: that he did not spare even his friends when the fit of sarcasm was upon him: and that though his contempt for affectation was often carried beyond the bounds of courtesy, he was yet ready to submit to, and even to enjoy, his own discomfiture, when, instead of submission, he met with a smart repartee. But after all, the real picture of a man like Swift is to be drawn from his more serious, and not his lighter, moments.

One source of annoyance increased on Swift as time went on. The memory of early years of privation made him feel with overwhelming force the need of money as an aid to independence: and this need made the love of money take an undue hold on him. His letters during this time recur again and again to money troubles, to unpaid rents, to vexatious lawsuits, to scanty revenues. Yet he was clearly saving money with sufficient rapidity. When he came to Ireland in 1714, in spite of debts incurred by his long stay in London, and in spite of heavy dues on his installation, he still had money to spare: and before his death, he had saved more than eleven thousand pounds—in those days no contemptible sum. His income as Dean, and Vicar of Laracor and the conjoined cures, was £700 or £800 a year, and fell little below that of the superior judges in the Dublin courts. He lived plainly, and though he kept two or three horses, in the selection of which he is said to have been careful, he never, unless we accept a story of his last days,* kept the equipage which was in Dublin considered an almost necessary requisite for those who held any considerable

* Bishop Rundle, the latitudinarian divine whose promotion caused so much excitement in Swift's later days, tells in a letter how Swift had vowed to set up a coach when Walpole fell: how news came to rouse him from his lethargy, telling that the fall had actually happened: and how he kept his vow, only to lay aside the equipage and sink back into greater gloom when a later packet brought a contradiction of the rumour.

position. He was, in his own words, the poorest man in Ireland who dined off plate, and the richest who did not drive his carriage. His house was a capacious one, situated in the centre of what was still a rich quarter of the city. His complaints of poverty, and his anxieties as to money, were indeed rather signs of general disappointment and ill-health, than the results of any pressure of pecuniary embarrassment.

Isolated as he was from the officially great, yet Swift's authority and countenance were sought in every project of importance. He ruled his Cathedral with a firm hand. He organized a system of restricting the pauperism that was eating into the vitals of Ireland, by granting badges to licensed beggars and dealing severely with the able-bodied vagabonds that infested the streets.* To maintain his hold over the tradespeople, and at the same time to increase the prospects of success for industry, he kept a certain sum of money to be used in giving loans to strugglers in their early efforts, without destroying their sense of independence.† In each and every sphere, in short, the force of his imperious will was felt: and the disappointment that breathes through so many of his letters is due to the smallness of the stage on which he acted, not to the smallness of the part he played.

Round him there was grouped a circle of intimates, amongst whom his authority was absolute, and by whom his caprices were submissively accepted. The closest of these was perhaps Sheridan, whose wit and humour, as well as his easy, kindly, unworldly character, attracted Swift. His horseplay sometimes offended,‡ and "his chief shining quality," in the words of Swift, "was that of a schoolmaster;" but he had other qualities that endeared him to the Dean. He had not a

* See the tracts beginning at p. 382 of Vol. VII. of Scott's 2nd edition.

† Johnson has spoken with bitterness of this trait, as "an employment of the catchpole, under the appearance of charity." Prejudice apart, Johnson could scarcely have blinded himself to the need of encouraging in Ireland the self-reliance which Swift saw to be the nation's chief want.

‡ *Swift to Delany*, Nov. 10, 1718. S. Kensington MSS.

little of the theatrical taste, which bore fruit in his more famous descendant. He was a good musician, and ready either to be the butt of Swift's lighter hours of merriment, or to meet him with some rhyming impromptu by way of repartee. Without injury to his temper, poor Sheridan bore the afflictions of a termagant wife and sluttish daughter; and far from repining over his domestic troubles, he even joined with Swift in extracting from them an aid to merriment. Even from him, Swift at last found cause of alienation: but the separation did not come till Sheridan was near his end, and till Swift had passed into that darkness which forestalled his death. Before that, Swift had shared with Sheridan not his trifling enjoyments only, but his deeper cares and sorrows. Sheridan knew more than any other of the secret between the Dean and Stella: and to him the Dean had trusted chiefly for news, at a time when Stella lay on what seemed likely to be her death-bed.

But the same ease and lightness of heart that made Sheridan so pleasant as a friend, stood sadly in his way throughout life. Swift obtained for him Carteret's patronage. He was made Chaplain, and seemed in a fair way of promotion. But as ill luck would have it, he chose for a text, on the day when he was to celebrate the accession of the House of Hanover, "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." "Poor Sheridan," as Swift puts it, "by mere chance medley, shot his own fortune dead with a single text."* "What business," says Swift to him, quoting Don Quixote, "had you to speak of a halter in a family where one of it was hanged?"† Swift strives to teach him what was perhaps a little more than even worldly wisdom, as an antidote to his too guileless confidence. "Think and deal with every man as a villain, without calling him so, or valuing him the less, or flying from him. This is an old true lesson." But while he lectures his poor friend on his folly, he

* See *Vindication of Lord Carteret.* (Scott's Swift, Vol. VII. p. 303.)

† *Swift to Sheridan*, September 11th, 1725.

will not let him escape on the plea of surpassing unselfishness. "I believe you value your temporal interest as much as anybody, but you have not the art of pursuing it." Advice fell with slight effect on Sheridan. To the end of his life he was never out of trouble. He brought down on himself the wrath of the Presbyterians by attacking their fanatical dislike to music from the pulpit at St. Patrick's: and provoked, in reply, their ridicule of "the merrymaking worship at the Cathedral, on St. Cecilia's day," and of the musical festivals, "that turned a Christian church into a playhouse." Through carelessness, errors, disputes, and misfortunes, Sheridan preserved his unruffled temper to the last: and finally died in poverty, having missed a dozen chances of competence and even wealth.

Two others who stood close to Swift, though they neither shared so completely his confidence, nor submitted so humbly to his caprice, were Dr. Helsham and Dr. Delany, Fellows of Trinity College. They had together built the house of Hel-Del-Ville as it was at first called, and they gathered round them there a circle which comprised Swift, and in the earlier days, Stella, to whose memory the house afterwards became a sort of shrine, when it was tenanted by Dr. Delany, and his wife, Mary Granville.* Of Helsham we have a description in Swift's own words.† "An ingenious good-humoured physician, a fine gentleman, an excellent scholar, easy in his fortunes, kind to

* Delville still remains as it was in the occupation of Mrs. Delany. It was by her hands that the elaborate shell decorations of the ceilings were executed, and to her perhaps is due the device of the star (Stella), that is inlaid in marble in the floor of almost every room: as well as the star-shaped window in the little oratory which opens off what was then the library. The garden remains much as it was when Swift spent his hours of leisure there, and enforced his tuition on Mrs. Pilkington (if we are to believe her story) by no gentle arguments. In the garden, the "Temple" has been rebuilt in the shape it stood not many years ago, when it contained the fresco portrait of Esther Johnson, said to be from Mrs. Delany's hand. It is another of the odd tokens of the freshness of the Dean's memory amongst the Irish people, that his ghost is still believed to haunt the place.

† *Swift to Pope*, February 13th, $17\frac{29}{28}$.

everybody, has abundance of friends, entertains them often and liberally; they pass the evening with him at cards, with plenty of good meat and wine, eight or a dozen together: he loves them all and they him." "Is not this," he asks, "the truly happy man?" Yet he is obliged to confess that he is not altogether to his taste. Unbroken complacency, such as Helsham's surroundings bred, was not likely to attract Swift's warmest regard.

Patrick Delany, born in a humble position, had pushed himself into prominence, as Fellow of Trinity, and as a preacher of some note. Like Swift, he was a Tory, and carried his Toryism at one time to the very extreme of High Churchism. He became obnoxious to Archbishop Boulter, and was for long barred of promotion: but as Swift's influence waned, Delany made terms with the government, moderated his extreme partisanship, and became indebted to Boulter for promotion to a deanery. He bore a share, like Sheridan, in the Dean's lighter sallies of wit: but, unlike him, he was careful not to allow his dignity to suffer loss by submitting to be a butt. With all his admiration for the Dean, his respect was mixed with criticism: and the volume in which he comments on Lord Orrery's Remarks contains estimates of Swift's genius in which the church dignitary has sometimes been more prominent than the literary critic. If Sheridan pleased the Dean by his careless wit, joined with much lack of worldly wisdom, Delany pleased him, as the vigorous opponent of the Whigs, as the wary companion of his whims and jests, and as the shrewd and keen-eyed man of the world.

There were others of humbler position, who moved on the edge of Swift's circle. Charles Ford, who had occasionally arranged for the publication of Swift's works and whom he had helped to the post of Gazetteer, was now settled not far off. We have an amusing picture of the complacency with which the little man, on the strength of his official authorship, and of some knowledge of foreign countries, took upon himself to

dogmatize even in the presence of the Dean, * and, strange to say, did so unrebuked. Faulkner, Swift's Irish bookseller, was another of his butts. He "out-caricatured caricature," says one reminiscence of him, which speaks of his "solemn assiduity of absurdity." † But absurd as he was, he was one of the notabilities of Dublin. His lameness—caused, as he himself averred, in escaping from a jealous husband, or, as his enemies alleged, in falling down an area when a butcher's boy—became a common topic in the satirical replies to the lampoons that issued from his press. He kept open house, and the gatherings there were so strange that Cumberland tells us how he met in the room on the same evening a criminal who had been reprieved at the gallows, and the judge who had condemned him. Amongst Faulkner's absurdities one was the habit of satisfying an instinct to temperance, by drinking copiously with a strawberry at the bottom of his glass, the cooling properties of which were to be a sufficient protection to sobriety. His conceit was proof against the sarcasm of the Dean. On one occasion of which Sheridan tells us, ‡ Faulkner came to Swift, it appears, in a laced waistcoat, a bag-wig, and other fopperies. Swift affected ignorance as to his visitor, and when poor Faulkner gave his name, threatened to commit him to the House of Correction for imposture. Faulkner presently returned in more becoming guise, and was greeted heartily, with a story of a scoundrel who had tried to pass himself off on Swift for the honest bookseller before him. "If you had dined with Dean Swift, you would have eaten as he bid you," said Faulkner in after-years, when some one twitted him for the poverty of spirit that made him eat his asparagus stalks as the Dean commanded him.

Beyond Dublin, Swift had friends in plenty. A few miles off lay Howth Castle, where he was a welcome guest, and whose surroundings he has celebrated in the verses on the cloud-

* *Mrs. Pilkington's Memoirs*, I. 65. † *Cumberland's Memoirs.*

‡ Sheridan's Life of Swift, p. 376.

covered Cape of Howth. Its mistress was Lady Howth, the "Blue-eyed nymph" of more than one poem, and her husband, Lord Howth, so prized his guest, as to procure the picture by Bindon, that now hangs in the Castle, and that tells us so much of Swift as he appeared in his last decade. The gleam of liveliness and humour that lightens up the picture of his prime, has vanished, and in its place has come a sullen haughtiness, the hurtful pride of a social magnate who disdains the applause that was actually his, but that was so different from what he would have chosen. In keeping with the expression is the tawdry design of the picture, where Wood is grovelling at the Dean's feet as a sort of Caliban. The picture fitly symbolizes the worst side of Swift, in this, the latest part of his career; the larger meaning of his half-tragic humour, the keenness of his cynicism with its background of sensitive tenderness, the melancholy of his own inner story with its depths of human interest, all narrowed down, as it were, into the hard austerity of the local potentate, who accepts, albeit with disdainful pride, the homage of a circle too small to allow his genius its fitting scope.

There were others who fill up the background of Swift's life, not as friends, or submissive followers, but as the adherents of the government to which he was opposed. One of the chief of these was the domineering Provost of Trinity College, Dr. Baldwin, whose strict rule of his university did not prevent him from giving so much point to Swift's satiric address to "Dear Baldwin chaste," that the students are said to have driven his mistress from the college bounds. Baldwin's violent Whiggism was sufficient, however, to rouse the hatred of Swift without the help of scandal: and between the two there was constant enmity. James Arbuckle, who wrote as "Hibernicus" in the Dublin Weekly Journal, was a hack of the government who employed his feeble pen to meet Swift's attacks. Ambrose Philips, the Namby Pamby of the Scriblerus circle, was now secretary to Archbishop Boulter, and was

pursued by parodies of the jingling and meaningless rhymes with which he flattered those in power—parodies to which Swift may have lent his aid—

> "Let your little verses flow,
> Gently, sweetly, row by row,
> Let the verse the subject fit,
> Little subject, little wit."

Almost out of the dark, as it were, there comes to us a curious indication of the attitude Swift presented to an outsider during these years. Thomas Amory, the Unitarian, the author of that half-insane medley called the Life of John Buncle, wrote a volume called "*Memoirs of Ladies*." In the preface he tells us that in a future publication he is to give an account of Dean Swift and (another Dublin celebrity) Mrs. Constantia Grierson. The promised publication never came: but a few of the words in which he anticipates it, are not without interest.

"I know the Dean well," says Amory, "though I never was within-side of his house, because I could not flatter, cringe, or meanly humour the extravagances of any man. * * * I had him often to myself in his rides and walks, and have studied his soul when he little thought what I was about. As I lodged for a year within a few doors of him, I knew his time of going out to a minute, and generally nicked the opportunity. He was fond of company on these occasions, and glad to have any rational man to talk to; for whatever was the meaning of it, he rarely had any of his friends attending him at his exercises. * * * What gave me the easier access to him was my being tolerably well acquainted with our politics and history, and knowing many places, &c., of his beloved England * * * We talked generally of factions and religion, states, revolutions, leaders and parties: sometimes we had other subjects. Who I was he never knew. Nor did I seem to know he was Dean for a long time, not till one Sunday evening that his verger put me into his seat at St. Patrick's prayers, without my knowing the Doctor sat there. * * * The Dean was proud beyond all other mortals that I have seen, and quite another man when he was known."

Few readers are likely to believe the whole of Amory's story: but it is not needful to do so, in order to extract some interest out of what he says. It is by gathering such stray glimpses, that we are able to fill in the outlines of Swift's life during

these years, and to picture him as he was, moving out and in amongst that motley Dublin society; in the plenitude of fame and influence, holding all who came near him under the thraldom of his will, but yet, to all intents and purposes, a lonely and a disappointed man.

The oracle of Dublin tradesmen, the organizer of poor law arrangements, the dispenser of a charity upon which those who could interest few others, had learned to depend,* Swift was also an encourager of the literary aspirants of Dublin. These were not a few; and in the number there were comprised three learned ladies, whose fame, such as it was, extended beyond the bounds of their own island. One of these was a Mrs. Sican,† a sprightly lady for whom Swift had some kindly feeling, and in whose lively, if somewhat restless wit, he found a subject of half-bantering compliment. More notable still was young Mrs. Grierson, who seems to have been possessed of more real learning than the exaggerations of her friends would lead us to suppose. Born in 1706, she died when only 27 years of age: and in spite of adverse fates in her earlier years, she had managed, so it was said, to become a perfect adept in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Mathematics, History, Philosophy, and Divinity. The cycle of her knowledge was large enough to make us fancy the whole to be fabulous: but she gave evidence of the partial truth of the reports in editions of Tacitus and Terence, by means of which she secured the patronage of Lord Carteret and the friendship of Swift. The last of the three, whose fame cast a lustre on Dublin, was Mrs. Barber: and in her, too, absurd as were the praises lavished on her, we are bound to

* A number of old women, afflicted with various ailments, and pursuing such chance vocations as were open to them, were in receipt of regular aid from Swift. Cancerina, Stumpanympha, Fritterilla, and the like, were the names he bestowed on these nymphs who composed, according to Delany, the seraglio which Lord Orrery ascribes to him.

† Swift wrote a letter introducing Mrs. Sican (or Sykins, as it is sometimes spelt) to Pope. "She has," he says, "a very good taste of poetry, has read much, and, *as I hear*, has writ one or two things with applause." *Swift to Pope*, 6th Feb. $17\frac{30}{29}$. Printed by Mr. Elwin (*Letters*, Vol. III. p. 177).

believe that there was some ability. She possessed none of the scholarship of the encyclopaedic Mrs. Grierson: but the latter, in some complimentary verses, finds a skilful and sufficient reason for the want. Apollo, she says, had ordered that Mrs. Barber should not write in the universal language of Rome, so that Roman poets might have a chance. Had he not taken this precaution

> "*Their* matchless fame, through many ages run,
> *Her* sex might boast, would be in one outdone."

Mrs. Barber published a volume of poems, for which Swift wrote a friendly introduction. In not one page of the volume does she rise above the frigid conceits and affectations of school exercises. But she managed to catch a passing breeze of literary fame; and even when old, and ill, and in poverty, she had enough of worth about her to make Mrs. Pendarves say that, in a visit to Bath, she found nothing that gave her more pleasure than the society of Mrs. Barber.

Literary jealousy had, indeed, so little part in the composition of Swift, that he scarcely cared to practise literary discrimination. A kindly thought, a desire to help a modest effort, a friendly personal feeling—these were quite enough to win from Swift a verdict of unstinted praise. He took under his protection a young literary aspirant, of the name of William Dunkin, and pressed his advancement with ungrudging labour. Dunkin had a claim on Trinity College, to whose authorities one of his kinswomen had left an estate: Swift helped him to press the claim. By his aid Dunkin was made teacher of the Latin school, under the patronage of St. Patrick's chapter: was introduced to Barber, the Lord Mayor of London, as "the best English, as well as Latin, poet in this kingdom:" and even an imprudent marriage, of all things the most likely to provoke Swift's anger, did not lose him the Dean's regard.

The same want of discrimination led him to give his

patronage where it was even less deserved. A young clergyman named Matthew Pilkington, whose ambition was to shine as a wit, forced himself on Swift's notice. He had shrewdness enough to offend none of Swift's prejudices at starting: and by a sufficient submission to his whims, as well as by the more lively humour of his young wife, Laetitia Van Lewen, he managed to ingratiate himself with the Dean. The connexion eventually came to be one of the troubles of Swift's later years: but in spite of the misdoings of the couple, there was clearly something in the wife that might have turned to good. Of the husband, nothing but what is bad can be said: and the story of his wrong-doings is again to force itself on our attention. But Laetitia Pilkington at least deserves our thanks for having given us, in her *Memoirs*, a picture of the Dean which is probably more true to the life than many that are more pretentious. Poor as are her literary efforts, they have more smartness than those of Mrs. Grierson and Mrs. Barber. Her sprightliness amused the Dean: he watched her literary freaks much as a mastiff might watch the gambols of a kitten. She shewed none of that affectation which was the most unpardonable of sins to Swift: and he admitted her to such intimacy as gives her reminiscences the value which they have for us. As a specimen, the following is sufficiently graphic to deserve quotation. She has described his manner at service, and goes on:

"Service being over, we met the Dean at the church door surrounded by a crowd of poor, to all of whom he gave charity, excepting one old woman, who held out a very dirty hand to him: he told her gravely, 'That though she was a beggar, water was not so scarce but she might have washed her hands.' And so we marched with the silver verge before us to the Deanery-House. When we came into the parlour, the Dean kindly saluted me, and without allowing me time to sit down, bade me come and see his study: Mr. Pilkington was for following us, but the Dean told him merrily, he did not desire his company: and so he ventured to trust me with him into the Library. 'Well,' says he, 'I have brought you here to shew you all the money I got when I was in the ministry; but do not steal any of it.' 'I will not indeed, sir,' says I: so he opened a cabinet, and shewed me a whole parcel of empty drawers; 'Bless me,' says he, 'the

money is flown:' he then opened his bureau, wherein he had a great number of trinkets of various kinds, some of which, he told me, were presented to him by the Earl and Countess of Oxford, some by Lady Masham, and some by Lady Betty Germaine." *

It is Mrs. Pilkington who tells us of Swift's manners with his servants: of his dealings with roguish workmen: † of the slight but not uncharacteristic trait—a habit "of sucking in his cheeks to prevent laughter:" of his memory of *Hudibras*, so accurate that "he could repeat every line from beginning to end of it;" and of his saying about Pope, that has a curious interest in the biography of both men, "that Pope was not so candid to the merits of other writers as he ought to be." These and other similar traits of the Dean, we owe to her: and his biographers, though they have either affected to ignore an authority so scandalous or have doubted her truth, are yet indebted for more than one of their anecdotes, to no other source.

A much more pleasant figure amongst Swift's surroundings in these years, is that of Mary Granville, then Mrs. Pendarves, and at a later day Mrs. Delany. She first met him in 1731, during a visit to Dublin. The sight of her must have brought back to him the memory of very different days, and of meetings in the house of her uncle Lord Lansdowne, Swift's "brother" of the Club. She was fourteen when the crash came

* *Mrs. Pilkington's Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 53.

† "I watched them very close," he told her, "while they were building the wall, and as often as they could they put in a rotten stone, of which I took no notice till they had built three or four perches above it: now as I am absolute Monarch and King of the Mob, my way with them was, to have the wall thrown down to the place where I observed the rotten stone, and by doing so five or six times, the workmen were at last convinced that it was their interest to be honest." Curiously enough, the story has confirmation in a remark which Swift himself makes to Bolingbroke (March 21, $17\frac{32}{29}$) putting, as usual, a bad construction on his own acts, and substituting a motive of pure mischief for good sense. "I built a wall five years ago, and when the masons played the knaves, nothing delighted me so much as to stand by, while my servants threw down what was amiss." Here then, at least, Laetitia Pilkington spoke the truth.

that destroyed the hopes of the Tories in 1714. She herself tells how her uncle, in the full tide of political and social success, suddenly found himself with reduced resources, a prisoner in the Tower: how she and her infant sister, roused from their sleep to be carried by soldiers to the Tower, were prevented sharing the imprisonment, only by coming under the protection of their aunt Lady Stanley, the wife of Swift's friend Sir John. She lost her hopes of becoming a Maid of Honour: and, instead, was wed, when little more than a child, to a coarse and dull old man, with whom she spent seven years of her youth in a lonely mansion in Cornwall. Scarcely was she free from the bondage of this union, by the death of Pendarves, than she was wounded by the heartless triflings of a male flirt, Lord Baltimore: and it was to shake off the memories of the past, that she came on a visit to her friend, Mrs. Donellan, in 1731. She threw herself into the new scene with all the freshness of enjoyment that she retained to a ripe old age: and from her pen we have a series of vivid pictures of the scenes in which Swift moved. She was struck especially, in coming from London, with the ready mutual understanding, the concentration of purpose, and the brisk gaiety of Dublin. In the boisterous hospitality of St. Stephen's Green, she sees the geniality alone without its worse side. In the evenings at Dr. Helsham's, Dr. Delany's, and above all at the Deanery, she finds a bright and unstudied wit that was refreshing after the fashionable monotony of London. To Swift she came as a bright reviver of scenes in which he had once moved with applause. She had played with him when he visited her uncles: she had sat on Bolingbroke's knee to look at a puppet show: and she reverenced those whom Swift admired. As yet she found him bright in society, though a few years later she had to lament his increasing gloom. She was happy to find him assume the name of her "master," and, after his manner, correct the faults of her pronunciation. She had not missed the first stepping stone to his regard—a readiness to submit to his rebukes: and the real worth she added to her grace and

bright intelligence, soon gave her a far stronger hold on his attachment than poor Laetitia Pilkington or Mrs. Barber was able to retain. When he writes to her next year it is with no sarcastic cynicism. He tells her how ill he is: but how much pleasure her letter brought to him, in his ill-health and loneliness. More fully to her than to almost any one else he explains his idea of the place of women: his repugnance to both the types of his day—those who dwindled into frivolous ignorance, and those who hardened into the eccentricity of the professed bluestocking.*

In 1728, Swift's jealousy on behalf of his Cathedral involved him in a dispute that might have led to serious consequences. The monuments in the Cathedral had in some cases been allowed by relatives to fall into disrepair, while in other cases the burial-place of the great was left without note or mark. Amongst those unmarked tombs was that of the Duke of Schomberg, the brave Dutch general of William III. Swift now applied to Lady Holderness, as the Duke's representative, to erect a fitting monument. The request met with a refusal: and, indignant at such heartless disregard, Swift erected the monument from the Cathedral funds, but made it, at the same time, a memorial of the ingratitude of the Duke's descendants.† The act was resented at the Prussian court: it increased the suspicions of Swift at that of St. James's: and even as late as 1734, we find him complaining to Pulteney that the epitaph has involved him in the displeasure of the court.‡

* *Swift to Mrs. Pendarves*, 7 Oct. 1734 and 29 January, 173$\frac{8}{9}$.

† "*Saltem ut scias, hospes, ubinam terrarum Sconbergensis cineres delitescunt.*" Swift had it at first "*ut sciat viator indignabundus, quali in cellulâ tanti ductoris cineres delitescunt.*" More prudent friends prevailed to soften the phrase.

‡ In an unpublished letter at Longleat, for which I am indebted to Mr. Elwin, I find the following curious reference to the incident, giving, at the same time, another trait in Swift's conduct. Writing to Lord Bathurst in 1735, he says: "My Lord, you are to know that this kind of procedure is a practice I have followed some years; for if a Tradesman cheats me, I put him immediately into a news-

In 1733, Swift revived his slumbering hatred against the Dissenters, in a poem which ridiculed their pretensions to be called by Churchmen "Brother Protestants and Fellow Christians." Swift had no taste for the association: and he satirizes it by a comparison with the impudence of "the booby Bettesworth," a serjeant-at-law, whose principles were unpleasing to Swift, and who had nevertheless the presumption to speak of himself and Singleton, a friend of Swift's, as "brethren." The reference so enraged the Serjeant, that, perhaps inflamed by wine, he swore to cut off Swift's ears, and hastened to find him in order to execute the threat. Swift was not to be found at the Deanery: but Bettesworth followed him to Mr. Worrall's house in Bride Street, and there sought an interview. Swift professed ignorance of his visitor: when Bettesworth announced his name and title, Swift only answered, with provoking coolness, "Of what regiment, pray?", and refused either to admit or deny the paternity of the satire. Swift was safe enough from Bettesworth's revenge: but the learned Serjeant's threats still pursued him: and so indignant were Swift's neighbours, that thirty-one of the "nobility and gentry" of his Liberty banded themselves together in an association for his defence. The story spread to London: it came back exaggerated to Swift: and the pens of a dozen followers were pressed into the service against the luckless Bettesworth. He became known as Serjeant Kite, and his practice was, on

paper, with the bare matter of fact, which the Rogues are grown so afraid of that they are often ready to fall on their knees for pardon. I began this scheme with a long record upon a large piece of black marble in my own cathedral, on the north side of the Altar, whereon I put a Latin inscription, which I took care to have published in seven London newspapers. The grand-daughter of the old Duke of Schomberg would not send me the £50 to make him a monument over his burying place, upon which I ordered the whole story to be engraved, and you must have seen the writing, several years ago, to the scandal of the family, particularly because His present M—— said 'G—d— Dr. Swift, whose design was to make him quarrel with the King of Prussia.' Thus I endeavour to do justice to my station, *and give no offence*." The last words repeat the demureness of the Drapier.

his own admission, injured. But it was not long before he gave Swift new ground of offence. In 1735, Hort, the Bishop of Kilmore, wrote a satire, of no great point or wit, on *Quadrille*, in which it was suggested, by way of ridicule, that disputes should be referred to Serjeant Bettesworth. Under Swift's auspices the piece was sent to Faulkner to be printed:* and Bettesworth, again provoked, this time used his privilege as member of Parliament to have Faulkner thrown into prison. Swift turned his anger upon Bettesworth, whom he gibbeted in the lines beginning,

> "Better we all were in our graves,
> Than live in slavery to slaves."

And it is clearly Bettesworth that he is describing in the *Legion Club* as one of those whom he heard

> "Roaring till their lungs are spent
> 'Privilege of Parliament.'"

Little was needed to rouse Swift against one who was at once a fomenter of dissent, and an adherent of the little clique through whom Walpole was ruling Ireland.

But ready as he was for the fray, disputes like these, combined with his ill-health, did not pass without leaving their impression. Year by year his gloom becomes more settled, his cynicism more abiding and more deep. "Life is not a farce," he says to Pope,† "it is a ridiculous tragedy, which is the worst kind of composition." He did not neglect society: he did not omit acts of kindness: he bore with Mistress Dingley, and never forgot the pension which he continued to pay her; he helped Mrs. Barber: he comforted the last days of poor Miss Kelly, the daughter of an Irish Jacobite, who was dying of consumption, neglected by her profligate of a father: but all this did not prevent the clouds from gathering more

* Hort, in sending this tract to him, asked Swift to "prune the rough feathers, and send the kite to the Falconer to set it a-flying."

† *Swift to Pope*, April 20th, 1731.

thickly over his own head. His powers were growing weaker. He could write nothing, he says, but trifles fit only to amuse an hour, and to be burned the next morning. More sad perhaps than all, any hopes he had ever formed for Ireland, were passing away. The momentary energy with which he had inspired the country was ebbing, and, as Alberoni said of Spain, the corpse he had resuscitated was about to sink again into the grave. "Oppressed beggars," Swift says, "are always knaves: and I believe there are hardly any other among us.

* * * This is our condition, which you may please to pity, but never can mend. I wish you success with all my heart. I have always loved good projects, but have always found them to miscarry."* Thus hopelessly he writes to one who was taking up, with more feeble hands, the torch that he had borne so well.

Amongst his new correspondents of these later years was the Earl of Orrery, whose acquaintance with him began about 1732. Orrery's *Remarks* have left no pleasant impression of his relations to Swift, and his desire to secure a certain kind of literary fame by means of his acquaintance was sufficiently transparent. Through the veil of literary foppery, and amidst all the tawdry and futile vanities of the *Remarks*, there pierces an almost constant gleam of petty rancour against Swift. Various stories have been told to account for this. Orrery, it was said by some, was offended by the superscription on one of his letters, found in Swift's desk—"This will keep cold." But so far as their correspondence goes, Swift's intercourse with him during these years seems to have been easy, pleasant, and affectionate. The laboured vanity of the man, his prim and priggish industry, the sedulous care with which he treasured up each scrap of his correspondence, and annotated his private memo-

* *Swift to Mr. Grant*, March 23rd, $17\frac{34}{35}$. "Looking upon this kingdom's condition as absolutely desperate," he says elsewhere, "I would not prescribe a dose to the dead." *Swift to the Countess of Suffolk* (October 26, 1731).

randa so as to point out their niceties of style, had something not unamiable and not unpleasing, possibly, to Swift.

It is from unpublished letters to Orrery that we learn the truth as to Swift's will, the provisions of which now occupied so much of his attention. The first will was made in 1735.* It bequeathed the whole of his savings to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of Dublin, for the foundation of a Hospital for Idiots and Lunatics. What may have been the motive we know not: possibly, in the words of his own poem, it may have been

> "To show by one satiric touch,
> No nation needed it so much."

But it is more likely that Swift, lonely as he was, and with no claims to meet, may have bethought him of the calamity that had clouded his uncle's last days, under the dread of which he had himself lived, and under the shadow of which he was to die: and may have felt that such sufferers had most claim upon his sympathy. Much of his thought was given to the settlement of the plan. "I have been some months," he writes to Lord Orrery,† "settling my perplexed affairs, like a dying man: and, like a dying man, pestered with continual interruptions as well as difficulties. I have finished my will in form, wherein I have settled my whole fortune on the City, in trust for building and maintaining an Hospital for Idiots and Lunatics, by which I save the expense of a chaplain and almost of a physician." In a later letter,‡ he asks Lord Orrery whether he can sell him the land in which he is anxious to invest the bequest. If he could, Swift says, "it would remove a great load from my shoulders, and be an ease to my mind, since years and ill-health have got possession of me, and I cannot long struggle with either." The bequest had brought him new consideration: and with a certain amusement he tells Lord

* Scott had conjectured this: but the letters to Orrery make it certain.

† *Swift to Lord Orrery*, 17th July, 1735 (Lord Cork's MSS.)

‡ *Swift to Lord Orrery*, 19th October, 1735 (Lord Cork's MSS.)

Orrery, in the earlier letter, that he is invited to dine with the Lord Mayor: a prodigious honour, which he believes he has earned "as Drapier and builder of a future hospital." But something occurred to change his purpose in one point. In 1737, he tells Lord Orrery,* "upon the city's favouring Fanatics (Presbyterians) I have altered my will, and not left the Mayor, Aldermen, etc., my trustees for building my hospital." This evidently refers to the making of the will, which was printed by Scott, from the papers which came to him through Theophilus Swift, and which named a certain number of selected trustees. It was finally superseded by the later will of May, 1740, which named a different body of trustees.†

His last purpose thus accomplished, there seemed nothing left for Swift but to await the oncoming of death. Before we see what the manner of that waiting was, we must first turn to another aspect of Swift's life, and to the part which he plays, during these years, in the sphere of literature, and as the correspondent of those old friends, who still occupied a large place in the literary arena of London.

* *Swift to Lord Orrery*, 31st March, 1737 (Lord Cork's MSS.). Some of these hitherto unpublished letters are printed in Appendix XII.

† It must have been in one of these earlier wills that he ordered that his body should be buried at Holyhead, "being cured of Irish politics by despair." (*Swift to Pope*, February 26th, $17\frac{30}{29}$.)

CHAPTER XVII.

LATER LITERARY WORK AND CORRESPONDENCE.

1727 to 1737.

ÆTAT. 60—70.

The circle of Swift's friends in London—Their attitude towards the Government—The *Beggars' Opera*—Its rapid popularity—Gay and his new fame—The *Dunciad*—Swift's hopes of rejoining the circle—Gaps by death—Congreve—Gay—Arbuthnot—Swift's correspondence with Bathurst—Relations with Bolingbroke and Pope—Swift's contempt for their philosophy—"*Orna me*"—Lady Betty Germaine—The Countess of Suffolk—Swift's complaints against her—Petty annoyances—Mrs. Barber and the counterfeit letter to the Queen—The Pilkingtons—Later literary efforts—*Verses on the death of Dr. Swift*—*The Beasts' Confession*—*The Place of the Damned*—*The Day of Judgment*—*The Rhapsody on Poetry*—*Polite Conversations*—*Directions to Servants*—Faulkner's Edition of the Works—*Verses to a Lady*—Walpole's irritation—Swift's increasing melancholy—The remnants of the old circle—The *History of the Four Last Years*, and its reception by his friends—Swift's work closed.

Besides these occupations in Ireland, Swift was leading a second life in his correspondence, and in his connection with the literary arena of London. It was towards that centre that he felt himself drawn with deepest interest: and the visits of 1726 and 1727 had served to revive its hold upon him. From that time his letters to the London circle became more constant, his interest in the literary schemes of his friends more quick, and his interchange of thought with them more frank and open. The confirmation of Walpole's power in 1727, involving, as it did, the discomfiture of Tory hopes and the lack of patronage for a literature of Tory sympathies, drove that circle into steadier opposition to the all-powerful minister. Their political ideals became more definite, their literary pessimism

more intense: they stood more closely together as a forlorn hope against what they maintained to be the total corruption of public life, and the utter degeneracy of public taste. Swift long continued to look forward to a time when he too would rejoin that band, and fight amongst them: but though that time never came, his old supremacy was not lost. The schemes in which he had borne a share were yielding new fruits, and his comments on these throw fresh light upon his later life.

Just after Stella had been laid in her grave, there appeared upon the London stage a play which attracted all men's notice, which served as a sort of landmark in literature, and which has been a household word ever since. This was the *Beggars' Opera*. Thriftless, improvident, and vain, with no fixed or definite purpose to guide his scintillating wit, Gay had now, under the guidance of Swift and Pope, produced a play which struck, with skill, a happy and novel vein of humour. We are told how the play was nearly damned: how it was saved by the charms of the leading actress: and how, at the turning point, this actress caught the fancy of the audience by her happy rendering of one of the songs. But, in truth, it would have been strange had the play not succeeded. The idea, suggested by Swift, of an "idyll of low life," had been most happily developed by Gay. The taste for the Italian opera, which Gay ridiculed, was already on the wane. All were tired of the dreary frivolity of the ordinary comedy, whose frail wit and monotonous immorality were constructed on lines so faithful to one type. A political meaning, real or fancied, was soon fastened on the play: the portrait of Walpole was seen in Macheath: and the violence of party feeling that had saved *Cato* completed the success of Gay's comedy. It became the first direct challenge of the wits to the minister, who ventured to govern without their aid, and heedless of their opposition.

Suddenly Gay found himself a new man. Timid of giving offence to a court which he had at first fawned upon, and then secretly abused, Gay had let other and abler hands put the

finishing strokes to his play. From embarrassment and obscurity, he found himself rising to comparative ease and fame. The way in which Gay's friends accept his triumph is characteristic of each. Pope speaks of it, but scarcely with what we could call real warmth. He tells, no doubt, of his "extreme satisfaction" at the success: but there is at the same time a certain sneer in the reference to Gay's being "occupied with the elevated airs of his opera." Arbuthnot speaks of it with the humour that was his chief trait.* When Gay was ill, he says, he strove for his recovery, with more than professional eagerness. "I took the same pleasure in saving him as Radcliffe did in preserving my Lord Chief Justice Holt's wife, whom he attended out of spite to the husband who wished her dead." Gay, he continues, is "one of the destructions to the peace of Europe, the terror of ministers, the chief writer in the *Craftsman*. * * * He is the darling of the city. If he should travel about the country, he would have hecatombs of roasted oxen sacrificed to him." But Swift, least of all, grudged any part of his friend's triumph. When the morality of the play was attacked by Dr. Herring (afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury), Swift took up the cudgels on Gay's behalf. The battle was waged pretty fiercely: and Swift maintained in the *Intelligencer* † that "nothing but servile attachment to a party, affectation of singularity, lamentable dulness, mistaken zeal, or studied hypocrisy, could have the least reasonable objection againt this excellent moral performance." Such praise of the *Beggars' Opera* undoubtedly sounds strange: but Swift never measured his words when he was fighting for a friend: and to have rejected the test of salutary moral teaching as a criterion for a work of pure humour, though probably the defence for

* *Arbuthnot to Swift.* March 19, $17\frac{29}{25}$.

† This was a Dublin weekly paper, which was got up on the model, which had become so popular in England by Swift and Sheridan. They wrote almost all that appeared in it: but it soon languished, from the want of a younger and more active editor—perhaps, also, of a larger public.

Gay which our own age would have deemed most appropriate, would scarcely have suited the literary canons of the day.

But, with his usual wisdom, Swift is even more solicitous about the use Gay will make of his gains, than of the ultimate judgment to be passed upon his work. After seeking long for government patronage, Gay had refused, as an indignity, the offer of the place of usher in the royal family. He had no certain provision, and Swift knew how likely it was that his sudden gains would slip through the poet's thriftless fingers. "Providence," he says to Pope,* "never designed Gay to be above two-and-twenty, by his thoughtlessness and gullibility. He has as little foresight of age, sickness, poverty, or loss of admirers, as a girl of fifteen." Gay was neither wise in keeping his money, nor very lofty in his conceptions of its use.† "Edit ergo est," was the parody of Descartes' dictum which Congreve applied to Gay; and even with such a character Gay never lost hold on the affection of Swift, nor irritated him further than to raise an occasional wish "that Gay was more disengaged from his intentness on his own affairs."

Gay's opera was taken as a challenge from the wits to Walpole. But a new and more weighty defiance was soon to be launched, and this time against the larger company of dunces. In May, 1728, the *Dunciad* appeared. Swift describes the progress of the poem, and claims his share, only because he did not interrupt the muse;

> "Yet to the Dean his share allot,
> He claims it by a canon;
> That without which a thing is not
> Is *causa sine quâ non*."

Pope's debt was indeed more than negative. The dedication to himself had been prized by Swift, and he feels some disappointment when the first edition creeps out without that

* *Swift to Pope*, July 16, 1728.

† "Wealth is liberty," Swift says in the same letter to Pope, "and liberty is a blessing fittest for a philosopher—and Gay is a slave." The words explain not a little as to the motives of that parsimony which has been charged against Swift.

preface. But he welcomes the poem none the less. "The *Beggars' Opera*," he writes to Gay, "has knocked down *Gulliver*: I hope to see Pope's *Dulness* knock down the *Beggars' Opera*, but not till it has fully done its job." He cannot follow all the allusions: but none the less, "after twenty times reading, he never saw so much good satire, or more good sense, in so many lines." Whatever Swift may have thought, beforehand, of the prudence of Pope's plan,* he was not likely to stay his hand or withdraw his sympathy when the fight had once begun. Pope was now entering on the period when his genius was most ripe, and when its fruition was most ample; and throughout the years that followed, when the Satires and Epistles were ever winning for him new enemies, there was no one who followed Pope's career with more interest, or who judged its many faults with more charity, than Swift. And yet to him, even as to other men, these faults must have been visible.

Swift long refused to relinquish hopes of mixing once again in the company he prized.† Gay had a plan that he and Swift should meet at Goodrich, to which the memory of his stout royalist grandfather gave an enduring attraction for Swift. But as years go on, the hopes of this visit fade away. In its stead, he urges Pope to come to Dublin, and tells him what honours will be paid him there.‡ Gradually even the hope of meeting vanishes. Apathy and listlessness

* And from the passage out of his private Journal in 1727 (see Chapter XIV.) we know that Swift believed Pope to have committed an error in conferring immortality on obscure scurrility.

† *Swift to Lord Oxford*, Sept. 21, 1728. "I intended to have passed this winter in London. * * But my health is so uncertain, I am forced to prefer a home where I can command people."

‡ "Dr. Delany shall attend you at Chester, and your apartment is ready. I have a most excellent chaise, and about sixteen dozen of the best cider in the world: and you shall command the town and Kingdom, and *digito monstrari*, &c." (*Swift to Pope*, March 6, $17\frac{29}{25}$). It is curious to find Swift baiting his invitation with the temptation that he knew to be most likely to attract Pope, protests notwithstanding—that of flattery and admiration; the old and common longing, "*dicier, Hic est.*"

come with paralysing effect. "I find all inclination is gone," he tells Pope;* "I awake so indifferent to everything which may pass either in the world or in my own little domestic, that I hardly think it worth my time to rise."

But though this hope was relinquished, the outlook on the larger scene was not the less keen. From 1728, the old intimates seem to enter more fully into Swift's life, each having his own part in that world which existed for Swift only by sympathy and memory. Each brings something to what Swift called "the usufruct" of his sunken capital: and as each one drops away, he leaves a distinct blank in Swift's life.

The first gap in this circle came by Congreve's death. "I loved him," says Swift, when he hears the news in February, 1728,† "from my youth; and surely besides his other talents he was a most agreeable companion." Swift had known him in the old school-days at Kilkenny, then at Trinity College; and one of his earliest efforts had been a laboured ode in Congreve's honour—Congreve, though a younger man than Swift, being even then the leading light amongst the wits. In the later days of Swift's greatness, Congreve had found Swift's help stand him in good stead when likely to lose place through his own Whig connexions. When at last Congreve passed away, wrecked by ill-health, by dissipation, and by a course of flattery that would have made a lesser man intolerable, Swift keenly felt his loss, though he could not wish that his friend had lived to endure longer torture. "Years have not yet hardened me," he says to Pope; "and I have an addition of weight on my spirits since we lost him: though I saw him so seldom, and possibly, if he had lived on, should never have seen him more."‡

* *Swift to Pope*, 15 Jan. 173⅓.

† *Swift to Pope*, Feb. 13, 172⅞

‡ That Swift had an affection, and even respect, for Congreve, is certain; but Congreve, as we have seen, did not appreciate *The Tale of a Tub*. In the Journal to Stella, there is a passage which may be read as if Swift, too, had a want of appreciation for that wherein his friend most excelled. Coming back to his lodgings on 29th Oct., 1711, he

Of those that remained, the most akin to Congreve was Gay. Early in the next year, Swift's attention was claimed by a new effort of Gay's in the shape of a second part of the *Beggars' Opera*, under the title of *Polly*. It might have attracted little attention, had not the Ministry been foolish enough to proscribe it; but, as it was, Gay's reputation became still more inflated: and he found new friends amongst the great. For his sake the witty and eccentric Duchess of Queensberry braved the anger of the Court, and carried her protests to the verge of indecent rudeness. From this time till his death Gay became a constant member of her establishment. In her train he passed from London to Amesbury, and from "the Bath" to Scotland. Repeatedly, on behalf of his patroness, he pressed Swift to share the hospitality which he himself enjoyed so liberally. The invitation pleased Swift. He had known the Duchess when a child, as Lady Catherine Hyde, and had been her father's and mother's friend. He enjoyed the tact by which the Duchess caught the tone in which it suited him to be addressed—one of mingled deference and banter. Her character attracted Swift. The puzzle of staid circles, the admiration of the wits, the toast of more than one generation of gallants, and the centre of an endless whirlpool of gossip, she retained even to extreme age that notoriety for which she thirsted, by keeping up the fashion that had been current in the heyday of her triumphs. Beyond almost any of her contemporaries, she attracted, in the words of Mrs. Pendarves, "the animadversion, the censure, and the admiration" of her

finds a volume of Congreve's play which his servant Patrick had got hold of. "I looked into it," he goes on, "and in mere loitering read in it till twelve, like an owl and a fool: if ever I do so again! never saw the like!" But the last sentence may well be taken as a protest against his own loitering reading, rather than as depreciatory of Congreve. We may often feel provoked with ourselves for desultory and aimless reading, even though we feel the book we read deserves more respectful treatment. And it is scarcely conceivable that, in 1711, Swift should have made his first acquaintance with Congreve's plays.

time. An invitation from her had some piquancy; and Swift played with it, even though he never was able to accept it.

When Gay makes an attempt of a new kind in the *Fables*, Swift's interest in it is greater than in the proscribed *Polly*. He sees in it exactly what suited the genius of his friend, and candidly confesses that his own attempts in the same kind had failed.* But it was destined to be Gay's last effort. In the following December (1732) he was suddenly cut off by a fever. It was Pope who sent the news to Swift: and with a presage of the ill-tidings, Swift could not bear to open the letter for five days. "He was indeed the most amiable by far, his qualities were the gentlest," says Pope. In the midst of his last agony, Gay had asked for Swift. No two men could have been more unlike. Yet their love was such as made Pope see that one of Swift's "principal calls to England is at an end." The blow involved, for Swift, the loss of one more ray of the fast-receding brightness that was left in his life. He receives it almost with an attempt at callousness. "I am only concerned," he says, "that long living has not hardened me."

A calmer spirit, and one whose sympathy with Swift was more deeply rooted, in opinion, in humour, perhaps also in association, than that of any contemporary, was also nearing his end. This was Arbuthnot. Conscious of their mutual love, the two friends sometimes remained silent to one another for years. When Gay died Arbuthnot wrote to Swift,† and received a reply in the old tone, but with added sadness. Arbuthnot was bowed down by bereavements and ill-health. Like Swift, he feels the world to be out of joint. The two friends are ready to enter into the efforts and aims of their younger contemporaries: but it is with a sense of being spectators rather than actors. The

* He explains his own method. "I found a moral first, and studied for a fable, but could do nothing that pleased me, and so left off that scheme for ever." *Swift to Gay*, July 10, 1732.

† It is in this letter that Arbuthnot applies to Curll, the biographical bird of prey, a phrase whose authorship is often wrongly attributed to others, "that he has added a new terror to death."

banter, the sarcasm, the glimmer of affectation so visible in the letters of Bolingbroke and Pope, and in which Swift sometimes instinctively follows them, drop away when he and Arbuthnot speak to one another. In a letter written after a period of silence,* Swift, as it were, greets Arbuthnot on the very threshold of death. He explains, with a confidence he would have used to no other, the various reasons of health that prevent his coming over: and adds with something of mild sarcasm, "I could not live with Lord Bolingbroke, or Mr. Pope: they are both too temperate and too wise for me, and too profound and too poor." There is doubtless much overdrawn gloom in the later letters of Swift and Arbuthnot. Swift suffers from a disease of sadness. He despises his fellows in Ireland, he says, yet he cannot live without them. Arbuthnot thinks the world is going apace to destruction. Ireland may be bad; but it is better than England: "for religion may exist over there for some twenty or thirty years longer; here it is dead and gone." All this was morbid, narrow, and doubtless false in feeling. But we cannot forget that it was only what others, younger, brighter, and with more of life before them than either Swift or Arbuthnot, also felt.

The last letter which Swift received from Arbuthnot was in October, 1734. He had sought a little health in the breezes of Hampstead: but the hand of death, as he knew well, was upon him.

"I am going out of this troublesome world," he says, "and you amongst the rest of my friends shall have my last prayers and good wishes. * * * I most earnestly desired and begged of God (in a recent severe attack) that he would take me. * * * I am in the case of a man almost in harbour and then blown back to sea. * * * I am afraid, my dear friend, we shall never see one another more, in this world."

In such a spirit Arbuthnot waited for death, which released

* Printed first from the MS. in the British Museum, by Mr. Cunningham in his edition of the *Lives of the Poets* (1854). Mr Cunningham dates it conjecturally 1733; but it seems to have been written at the close of 1732, in reply to Arbuthnot's postscript to Pope's letter of 5th Dec., 1732.

him in the following spring, his piety mingled to the end with much of his half-humorous, half-philosophical, apathy, which suggests to old Alderman Barber the saying of Garth, as applicable to Arbuthnot, "that he was glad to die, being weary of having his shoes pulled off and on."*

The news of his death "struck me," says Swift, "to the heart." The kindly moderator of bitterness, the easy spirit that had brightened so many lives, whose insight was so keen though his charity was so large, was gone from amongst them. "If the world had but a dozen Arbuthnots," Swift had written long before,† "I would burn my *Travels*." Arbuthnot had been raised above the envy of others by his carelessness of ambitious aims, as much as Swift by his surpassing power.

Other friends lived on. Lord Bathurst, whose peerage was a memorial of the crisis which had cost Swift so much anxiety in 1711, when the Ministry had been saved only by a desperate expedient, was now, with Bolingbroke, Pope's chief literary friend; and the sprightly wit and gaiety that delighted three generations of literary men brought not a little brightness also to Swift. Bathurst's letters are perhaps somewhat forced in their style of lavish compliment, but they pleased Swift so far as to bring him to copy something of their style in his replies. After a long silence, Bathurst renewed their correspondence in 1729, by some lively banter on Swift's *Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of the Poor from being a Burden*. Swift's answer seems to have been drawn in the same vein: and writing again in September, 1730, Bathurst threatens to take revenge by shewing that Swift has borrowed his numbers from Dryden and Waller, his thoughts from Virgil and Horace, and his humour from Cervantes and Rabelais. He is sure, at least, that he has seen something like them all in Swift's books. By seeming depreciation, he emphasizes Swift's claims to praise. As to Swift's power of writing English—well, that was only a matter of style. If Swift is a patriot, there have

* *Barber to Swift*, April 22, 1735. † *Swift to Pope*, Sept. 29, 1725.

been patriots before. He can doubtless kindle men's passions. But surely he, a clergyman, can have little cause for boasting if, by an hour's work in his study, he has often made three kingdoms drunk at once.

To this banter, lively enough in its way, Swift replies in much the same tone. From the kingdom "whither Lord Bathurst and his crew sent him sixteen years before," and where, since then, he has been "studying as well as practising revenge, malice, envy, and hatred, and all uncharitableness," he reports some of the puny efforts by which "they strive to keep up their spirits"—Sheridan's Collection of Jests, Pilkington's complimentary poems, Mrs. Barber's literary ambitions: and he repays Lord Bathurst's irony thus :—*

"When Sir William Temple writ an essay preferring the ancient learning to the modern, it was said that what he writ showed he was mistaken; because he discovered more learning in that essay than the ancients could pretend to. This, I think, was too great a compliment, but it is none to tell you that I would give the best thing I ever was supposed to publish in exchange to be author of your letters. I pretend to have been an improver of the irony on the subject of satire and praise: but I will surrender up my title to your Lordship. Your injustice extends further. You accuse me of endeavouring to break off all correspondence with you, and at the same time demonstrate that the accusation is against yourself; you threaten to pester me with letters if I will not write. If I were sure that my silence would force you to one letter in a quarter of a year, I would be wise enough never to write to you as long as I live. I swear your Lordship is the first person alive that ever made me lean upon my elbow when I was writing to him, and by consequence this will be the worst letter I ever writ. I have never been so severely attacked, nor in so tender a point, nor by weapons against which I am so ill able to defend myself, nor by a person from whom I so little deserved so cruel a treatment, and who in his own conscience is so well convinced of my innocence upon every article. I have endorsed your letter with your name and the date, and shall leave it to my executors to be

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* The letter is from an unpublished MS. amongst the Bathurst papers at Longleat. It is undated, but is clearly a reply to Lord Bathurst's of 9 Sept., 1730. The reference to Sir William Temple, especially with the reserve as to the exaggerated compliment, is not without interest, as evidence of Swift's real opinion of his early patron.

published at the head of all the libels that have been writ against me, to be printed in five volumes in folio after my death ; and among the rest a very scrub one in verses lately written by myself. For having some months ago much and often offended the ruling party, and often worried by libellers, I was at the pains of writing one in their style and manner, and sent it by an unknown hand to a Whig printer, who very faithfully published it. I took special care to accuse myself but of one fault of which I am really guilty, and so shall continue, as I have done these sixteen years, till I see cause to reform ; but in the rest of the satire I chose to abuse myself with the direct reverse of my character, or at least in direct opposition to one part of what you are pleased to give me."

Bathurst writes again in April, 1731, in a series of rather forced epigrams based on the irony so cultivated by the circle amongst whom he moved, and the wit of which is so apt to pall from repetition. The tone of the whole letter is summed up in the words with which it closes: "In this farce of life, wise men pass their time in mirth, while fools only are serious. Adieu. Continue to be merry and wise: but never turn serious, or cunning."

To witticisms such as these, Swift, with all his gloom, is always ready to make a happy reply. As in his earlier friendship with Prior, so now with Lord Bathurst, he accepted the careless cynicism that called itself a philosophy of life, as a relief from heavier thoughts. He allowed it to turn his mind from disappointment, from the thought perhaps of wasted opportunity ; from the loneliness of his present life, and from the fear of calamity to come.

We dwell on the record of friendships like these, with men so different, because it helps us to define to ourselves somewhat more clearly Swift's attitude during these later years. Side by side with the almost despairing struggle for Ireland, and beyond the narrow circle of Dublin society, that intercourse gave Swift a wider outlook. It helped him to live in the past, and afforded him an escape from the gloom of the present.

Literary history, as has been said, assigns a larger place to the later friendship of Swift, Bolingbroke, and Pope. These

three stood, alone, at a height which none of their contemporaries reached. More than all others, they had chosen parts which gradually drew them out of harmony with their age, which placed them in sharp antagonism to the powers that now prevailed, and which made them look on one another as the leaders of a forlorn hope. Something of the same spirit that spoke in the *Dissertations upon Parties* spoke also in *Gulliver*, in the *Dunciad*, and in the *Epistles*. But, after all, the bond was an intellectual more than a personal one. Swift had no doubt been attracted by the early brilliancy of St. John. But even in old days their personal sympathy had not been strong. Swift had been repelled by St. John's caprices, by his unabashed debaucheries, above all by the affectation which was the canker-worm to his genius. He had repudiated with indignation the Jacobite leanings ascribed to himself and to the Ministry whom he served: but a few years had shewn him how deeply Bolingbroke was involved with the Pretender. Over all that episode Swift was obliged to drop a veil; and when he accepted Bolingbroke's later view of his own lot, as that of a persecuted patriot, Swift must have been content to ignore all in Bolingbroke's action that had given warrant to the most bitter accusers of the Queen's last Ministry.

The same flaw has already been noticed in his relations with Pope. He had become the patron of Pope in the days when his patronage could earn for the poet the attention of the great. By his influence Pope had at first refrained from joining the triumphant Whigs, and latterly had cultivated the Tories. Swift had sympathized with Pope in his dislike of the monied classes. He had sympathized with him still more in his indignation against Walpole's encouragement of the dunces. Their political position, their literary sympathies, the circle of their friends, their intellectual partnership, had all brought them near to one another. But there were always some grains of dissatisfaction in their friendship. Swift was alive to the pettiness, the vanity, the lack of generosity, in Pope. He was

ready to greet the *Dunciad* with applause, and to accept Pope's heralding of its approach with the words,

> Cedite, Romani scriptores, cedite Graii,
> Nescio quid majus nascitur Iliade.

But it was no real sympathy of nature which bound together Pope and Swift. Pope borrowed or imitated the mood of Swift, just as he did that of the friend of each season of his life. But a shrewd observer thought it was well that their later intercourse became no closer than it was. The sudden breaking away from Pope's house in 1727 may have had some motive more deep than that which Swift assigned. Swift very probably never fully admitted to himself any real distrust of Bolingbroke and Pope. It is to them that he owed the keenest incitement to renewed endeavours on a greater stage. At times, from their prompting, he was ready to break from his banishment, to come back to the old scenes, to set the world stirring again. He is wearied of the "smaller game:" he will return to England and "send for the Dictator from the plough."* Again he would fain be assisting Pope in his literary schemes, or riding between Twickenham and Dawley, or discussing Polybius over his wine. He would like to take part "in a new entertainment"—to crush Walpole's Ministry: and by their help he would get into a better world before he has done with it, and "not die here, like a poisoned rat in a hole." But the mood is short. He soon relapses into listlessness, and feels how unfit he is, broken in health, to ask these younger friends to bear with his infirmities. Their nearer intercourse implied an effort and a strain for which he felt himself unequal. To the last, indeed, he addresses them in language of warm affection. But he could not avoid seeing their affectation, and the insincerity of many of their boasts. "I renounce your whole philosophy," he says, "because it is not your practice." They have adopted their maxims

* *Swift to Bolingbroke*, March 21, $17\frac{29}{30}$. The date, wrongly given by Scott, is corrected by Mr. Elwin in his edition of Pope's Letters, Vol. II. p. 188.

of "*contemptus mundi*" too easily and too young. The gloom that he felt eating into his own heart and poisoning his life, the misanthropy for which he sometimes despised himself, but from which he could not escape, was in Pope's mouth, as Swift well knew, nothing but an affectation. The poet's dislikes were of those who hurt him, or who came athwart his path: those of Swift were of human nature as a whole. But it was no unkindly trait in Swift that none of the weaknesses he saw in Pope, lessened his feeling of habitual regard. "Farewell, my dearest friend," are the words with which he closes almost every letter, even as the gloom was becoming more settled, and the shadow of coming calamity lengthening before him.

There was nothing inconsistent with Swift's dignity, in the desire he expresses more than once to find a place in the creations of his friends. The fame that his own works had earned, was cast aside by him with something of contempt. Any profits that they might have brought him, he had uniformly neglected: and, with some cynicism, he declares that his object in cultivating literature had been to gain that social distinction which was not his by birth. But the honour which his friends might bring him, he did not despise. "*Orna me*," he says to Pope in 1735, "I have the ambition, and it is very earnest as well as in haste, to have one Epistle inscribed to me while I am alive, and you just in the time when wit and wisdom are in the height." So he had before said to Gay, "I sometimes reproach you for not honouring me by letting the world know we are friends." And so again, as late as 1738, he begs of Bolingbroke, if he writes a history of his own time, "that my name may be squeezed in amongst the few subalterns, *quorum pars parva fui*." If the desire is faulty, it is, at least, not on the side of insufficient modesty, or of undue depreciation of his friends' powers of assigning immortality.

Amongst the less famous correspondents of Swift's later years, it would be unjust to omit one whose frank and outspoken advice served him in better stead, perhaps, than the elaborate

affectations of his more brilliant literary compeers. This was Lady Betty Germaine, a daughter of Lord Berkeley, and the friend of Swift in the early days of Dublin Castle and of Cranford. Lady Betty had, if we are to believe the story told by the Duchess of Marlborough, got into some trouble in her youth. But these irregularities had been covered by a subsequent marriage with Sir John Germaine, who had left her a wealthy widow in 1718. She now lived at Drayton in Northamptonshire: and the scandals that were caused by early errors did not prevent her mixing with the best society of England down to a ripe old age. Of all Swift's later correspondents, she shews the most integrity, the most outspoken condemnation of his faults, the most of that sincerity of friendship, which eschews flattery. She sought to soothe his misanthropy; but when her efforts fail, she is not slow to rebuke his petulance: and it might have been well for Swift if he had more often heard words as plain as these from Lady Betty:—

"As to your creed in politics, I will heartily and sincerely subscribe to it, (that I detest avarice in courts, corruption in ministers, schisms in religion, illiterate fawning betrayers of the Church in mitres). But at the same time, I prodigiously want an infallible judge to determine when it is really so: for, as I have lived longer in the world, and seen many changes, I know those out of power and place always see the faults of those in, with dreadful large spectacles. * * * So experience has taught me how wrong, unjust, and senseless, party factions are; therefore, I am determined never wholly to believe any side or party against the other: and to show that I will not, as my friends are in and out of all sides, so my house receives them altogether: and those people meet here, who have, and would fight in any other place."*

It was one of the symptoms of Swift's fretfulness during these years, that comparatively small annoyances told on his spirits in a degree that to a healthy man would have been impossible. One of these sources of annoyance arose from Lady Betty's friend, the Countess of Suffolk. In common with the opposition faction, Swift had, in the later days of George

* *Lady Betty Germaine to Swift*, Feb. 28, 173$\frac{3}{2}$.

the First, cultivated the friendship of Mrs. Howard (as she then was) as a probable counterpoise to the influence of Walpole. The favour which Mrs. Howard enjoyed, however, was undermined by the tactics of the Princess of Wales—tactics so strange in the domestic annals even of royalty that shrewd observers may well have been blind to them until the clue to the secret was obtained. The Princess, even after she became Queen, ruled her husband by means of a favourite who was at once the instrument of her dishonour and of her ambition. Through the Queen, Walpole's influence continued: and that of Mrs. Howard, created Countess of Suffolk, was absolutely set at nought. Upon her therefore fell the brunt of the opposition anger. By her they felt themselves deceived, disappointed, and misled. Her insincerity, her courtier-like promises, her indifference to friendship—all these became their theme; and Swift was not the least prominent in the denunciation, refusing to listen to the apologies of Lady Betty Germaine. He had wrongs of his own—partly owing to the non-payment of the thousand pounds, which had waited since the days of Lord Oxford, and which he had hoped might now have been secured. Still worse, Swift fancied that she had misled him by a suggestion of a settlement in England. The advice seems to have been as honestly given by Mrs. Howard as she herself avers. "If I cannot justify the advice I gave you," she writes in answer to his reproaches,* "from the success of it, I gave you my reasons for it: and it was your business to have judged of my capacity from the solidity of my arguments. If the principle was false, you ought not to have acted upon it." The retort is unanswerable: and nothing but the irritation of disappointment and ill-health could have led Swift to charge his mistake upon another rather than himself. A more worthy, if not a more reasonable ground of ill-will, was due to the fancied neglect of Gay. Gay had written his *Fables* for one of the royal children: and the appointment of Gentleman-Usher, which

* *The Countess of Suffolk to Swift*, Sept. 25, 1731.

was offered as his reward, was deemed by himself and his friends —Swift amongst the rest—unequal to his deserts. All these causes served to feed Swift's anger. Even as early as 1727 he had written a character of Mrs. Howard, which, with some flattering phrases, contains sarcasm in much greater quantity. The key-note of it is her excellence as a courtier. "In all other offices of life she acts with justice, generosity, and truth." "If she had never seen a Court, it is not impossible that she might have been a friend." "Her talents as a courtier will spread, enlarge, and multiply to such a degree, that her private virtues, for want of room and time to operate, will be laid up clean (like clothes in a chest), to be used and put on whenever satiety, or some reverse of fortune, or increase of ill-health (to which last she is subject) will dispose her to retire."

That Swift was not without his suspicions, when he wrote these words, is clear. But they were probably intended, and read, as a warning of possible failings rather than as an actual picture of the reality. In 1730 and 1731, however, their anticipations seem to Swift to be realized: and he turns upon the false promises of the favourite with an anger which she did not deserve, and which Swift had earned no right to shew. It is some satisfaction that the indignation shewed itself chiefly in letters to Lady Suffolk herself, and that although it cooled, it did not end, their friendship.*

A trifling occasion still further complicated his relations to the Court. In 1731, a counterfeit letter was sent to the Queen, purporting to be from Swift, and praising, in terms so lavish as to be absurd, the Irish poetess, Mrs. Barber, whom Swift had taken under his patronage and who was now in London, seeking to extend her literary fame. The letter seems to assume that the neglect of Mrs. Barber was a new instance of that disregard

* From certain expressions it has sometimes been supposed that Swift changed from open flattery to something of concealed abuse. But nothing is more bitter than the letters addressed to the Countess herself. Swift was peevish from disappointment, age and ill-health: to be deceitful, either in praise or blame, was to him impossible.

for Irish claims which distinguished England. Such a travesty of his work as Drapier was enough to irritate Swift: but still more was he annoyed at the supposition that he had sought for anyone the patronage of the Queen. Both through Pope and the Countess of Suffolk, he hastens, with almost needless eagerness, to disavow the authorship of the obnoxious letter. Its concoction still remains a mystery. Of all possible solutions that is most unlikely which would ascribe it to Swift: that most likely which would suppose it to be the work of some foolish or indiscreet admirer of Mrs. Barber. Even the poor authoress herself, much as her genius was overrated even in Swift's estimate, was scarcely capable of conduct so damaging to her own reputation as this.

Another annoyance of these later years was the result, not of Swift's proneness to irritation, but of his helpfulness to those who sought his aid. We have seen how the curate, Matthew Pilkington, and his wife, another of the aspiring authoresses of Dublin, had managed to push themselves into his favour. Over-estimating their literary pretensions, and deceived as to their honesty, Swift had pressed Matthew Pilkington on the notice of his London friends. Alderman Barber,* whom Swift had helped to fortune in the days of his power, was in 1732 on the eve of his mayoralty; and Swift, who had brought Pilkington to the notice of Pope and Gay and Arbuthnot, now begs Barber to make him Chaplain during his year of office. The request was granted; but Swift soon found cause to repent of his recommendation, when Pilkington shewed himself in his true colours, as a coxcomb and a knave.†

* Mrs. Pilkington (*Memoirs*, 1. p. 159), gives us a description of Barber from the life. "On account of his opposition to the Excise Act, he was then the darling of the people. He was but indifferent as to his person, or rather homely than otherwise; but he had an excellent understanding, and the liveliness of his genius shone in his eyes, which were very black and sparkling."

† Barber was obliged to reveal to Swift the knavery of his *protégé*: and Bolingbroke, with even more bluntness, remonstrates: "Pray, Mr. Dean, be a little more cautious in your recommendations." (*Bolingbroke to Swift*, April 12, 1734).

In these later years Swift's melancholy found relief nowhere more easily than in those literary occupations that in earlier days he had striven to thrust into the background, amongst the stirring scenes of political activity. In literary fame, too, which he had before neglected and despised, Swift now found a solace amid his gloom. The tribute of that fame was offered from strange sources, and it brought to Swift a content not unmixed with something of irony.

In one of his latest letters to her, Swift tells Lady Suffolk that he is resolved to have a hand "in state scribble no more." The words referred to that angry fight that was now being waged against Walpole's Ministry, under the guidance of Bolingbroke, Wyndham, and Pulteney; and it was well for Swift's fame and for his comfort that in the main he refrained. The anger against the Minister had lost even the dignity of a party struggle, and had dwindled into the attacks of a selfish faction, backed up by the exaggerated anathemas of a literary clique. Swift's combats were now fought on Irish soil; and the time he could spare from his struggles there, was given to work in which his genius found a much more fitting channel. "I have been several months," he writes to Gay,* with probable exaggeration of his aversion to sustained effort, "writing near five hundred lines on a pleasant subject, only to tell what my friends and enemies will say of me after I am dead." "My poetical fountain is drained," he tells Pope; † but it continued nevertheless to flow copiously enough. The words to Gay described one of his most characteristic pieces—the *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift*. Never attempting to rise into great heights of poetry—studiously keeping himself to the note of ironical humour which he has chosen, and which admits hints of bitter cynicism, though it never allows these to break its equanimity —Swift has here achieved a success which more elaborate

* *Swift to Gay*, Dec. 1, 1731. Scott has misdated the letter.

† *Swift to Pope*, June 12, 1732. Again the date is wrongly given by Scott.

poetry would have missed. Keen observation, subtle irony, and bitter cynicism, never took a lighter or an easier dress.

> Here shift the scene, to represent
> How those I love my death lament;
> Poor Pope would grieve a month, and Gay
> A week, and Arbuthnot a day;
> St. John himself will scarce forbear
> To bite his pen, and drop a tear.
> The rest will give a shrug, and cry,
> "I'm sorry—but we all must die!"
> Indifference, clad in wisdom's guise,
> All fortitude of mind supplies:
> For how can stony bowels melt,
> In those who never pity felt?
> When we are lashed, they kiss the rod
> Resigning to the will of God."

The defence of his own political attitude, which the piece contains, is bold enough; but, as giving his own conception of his task in satire, the lines that follow have even more of interest, and that interest is all the deeper when we contrast their sincerity with the pompous vapourings of Pope, at such times as he is in the humour of advancing his frequent claims to magnanimity:

> "Perhaps I may allow the Dean
> Had too much satire in his vein;
> And seem'd determined not to starve it,
> Because no age could more deserve it.
> Yet malice never was his aim;
> He lash'd the vice, but spared the name:
> No individual could resent,
> Where thousands equally were meant;
> His satire points at no defect,
> But what all mortals may correct;
> For he abhorr'd that senseless tribe
> Who call it humour when they gibe:
> He spared a hump, or crooked nose,
> Whose owners set not up for beaux.
> True genuine dulness moved his pity,
> Unless it offer'd to be witty.
> Those who their ignorance confest,
> He ne'er offended with a jest;
> But laugh'd to hear an idiot quote
> A verse from Horace learn'd by rote."

Shorter poetical pieces followed one another profusely during these years, each telling us something of the restless and fierce misanthropy and contempt that were extending their thraldom day by day. The *Beasts' Confession* pictures the transparent affectations of humanity, by similitudes of brutes. He duly apologises for a comparison only too complimentary to men; but he has done his best by giving only the lowest orders of brutes—in describing the ass, who blames nature that "he is a wit both born and bred;" the swine, who feels it needful to ask pardon if he "in diet was perhaps too nice;" the ape, who

> "Found his virtues too severe
> For our corrupted times to bear;"

and the goat, whose vow of chastity must excuse his prudish nicety.

In 1731, the stirring lines on the *Place of the Damned*, appeared, as a Broadsheet, in Dublin. Hell, he says, is where the damned do mostly congregate. A catalogue, too clearly embracing the very plagues of Irish society, so often satirised by Swift, is given, and he closes thus:—

> "Then let us no longer by Parsons be flammed,
> For we know by these marks the place of the damned;
> And Hell to be sure is at Paris or Rome:
> How happy for us that it is not at home."

To the same period most probably belong those verses, *On the Day of Judgment*, which have come down to us only through Lord Chesterfield's quotation of them in a letter to Voltaire.* Short as they are, and although we may perhaps accept the reason at which Chesterfield hints, as that of their suppression

* *Chesterfield to Voltaire*, Aug. 27, 1752. "La pièce," says Chesterfield, "n'a jamais été imprimée, vous en devinerez bien la raison, mais elle est authentique. J'en ai l'original écrit de sa propre main." The reason we are meant to divine, is clearly the sarcasm on an accepted dogma: and certainly it would be hard to produce another passage in which Swift is, *intentionally*, so outspoken in his ridicule of a common belief as he is here. The effect of what he says is often the same; but he is unconscious of the bearing of his words. Here the ridicule is conscious and avowed.

by Swift himself, they yet serve as a condensed specimen of Swift's skill of grim humour at its highest pitch:

"With a whirl of thought oppress'd,
I sunk from reverie to rest.
An horrid vision seiz'd my head;
I saw the graves give up their dead!
Jove, arm'd with terrors, burst the skies,
And thunder roars, and lightning flies!
Amaz'd, confus'd, its fate unknown,
The world stands trembling at his throne!
While each pale sinner hung his head,
Jove, nodding, shook the heavens, and said:
'Offending race, of human kind,
By nature, reason, *learning*, blind,
You who through frailty step'd aside,
And you who never fell—*through pride*;
You who in different sects were shamm'd,
And come to see each other damn'd;
(So some folks told you, but they knew
No more of Jove's designs than you),
—The world's mad business now is o'er,
And I resent these pranks no more.
—I to such blockheads set my wit!
I damn such fools!—Go, go, you're *bit*.'"

The year 1733 saw the *Rhapsody on Poetry*,* which stands side by side with Pope's *Epistle to Augustus*, and transcends the latter in its force of sweeping sarcasm. Comparing the two poems, Pope's with all its marvellous skill, all its command of metre and language, all the subtlety of its satire, yet falls short of the other in variety. There is in the poem a reminiscence of *Gulliver*, in its contempt of humanity; a reminiscence of the *Drapier*, in its obstinate independence; a reminiscence of the *Tale of a Tub*, in the grasp and yet the simplicity of its metaphor. As poetry, perhaps as a pure literary effort, it is inferior to Pope; but its power and resistless force of sarcasm hold us in a grasp compared with which Pope's highest efforts

* It was published anonymously in London in 1733. "Your method of concealing yourself," says Pope, "puts me in mind of the Indian bird I have read of, who hides his head in a hole, while all his feathers and tail stick out." *Pope to Swift*, Jan. 6, 173$\frac{4}{3}$.

seem weak and almost tame. Quotation would mar the force of the satire. But, looking back to the days of the Pindaric odes, and to the dread with which Swift once regarded his muse, there is not a little of biographical interest in the two maxims that follow:

"Not empire to the rising sun
By valour, conduct, fortune won;
Not highest wisdom in debates,
For framing laws to govern states;
Not skill in sciences profound
So large to grasp the circle round;
Such heavenly influence require
As how to strike the Muses' lyre.
Not beggar's brat on bulk begot
Not bastard of a pedlar Scot;
Not boy brought up to cleaning shoes
The spawn of Bridewell or the stews
Not infants dropped, the spurious pledges
Of gypsies litter'd under hedges,
Are so disqualified by fate
To rise in Church, or law, or state,
As he whom Phœbus in his ire,
Has blasted with poetic fire."

Besides these, he tells Gay in 1731,* that he has "two great works in hand—one to reduce the whole politeness, wit, humour, and style of England into a short system, for the use of all persons of quality, and particularly of all maids of honour. The other is of almost equal importance: I may call it the whole duty of servants, in about twenty several stations, from the steward and waiting woman, down to the scullion and pantry boy." These two were the *Polite Conversations*, and the *Directions to Servants*. The first of these has a special biographical interest. Swift was now interested, more than he ever had been, in the fate of his books. Keenly striving to increase his store of savings, he was perhaps more ready now than before to make them yield some gain. But poor Mrs. Barber wrote to him, in extreme distress. Her literary projects had failed, her health was broken, and debt was

* *Swift to Gay*, Aug. 28, 1731.

accumulating. Kindly as she had been received by Swift's friends, the kindness did not feed her. To help her in these straits, Swift, in one of the last years of his activity, sends her the manuscript of the *Polite Conversations*, that she may make of it what she can. The avarice, the mercenary aims, the cynical selfishness of Swift had, at least, the quality of singular inconsistency.

The other "great work," the *Directions to Servants*, has had to stand the brunt of much severe criticism, from the days of Orrery down to our own. Orrery found it trifling: others have dilated upon its grovelling view of human nature, and the coarseness with which it is stained. Any discussion of these traits must be reserved for our general estimate of Swift's genius. To almost every part of that genius, doubtless, something of the same coarseness clings; but without the keen insight, without the deliberate and relentless dissection, without the plain and homely humour, without the contempt for conventional grades of dignity, which are so distinctive of the *Directions to Servants*, that genius could not exist.*

* Though unprinted during Swift's life, the *Directions to Servants* was handed about and discussed; and this may have procured for Swift the doubtful honour of the dedication of a translation of a coarse Latin poem written in Germany, which seems not to have been without suggestion for Swift's own book. The Latin version was entitled "*F. Dedekindi Ludus Satyricus de morum simplicitate et rusticitate, vulgo dictus Grobianus;*" and is dated 1552. The purpose of this book may be gathered from the author's own description:—

Quae fuerant facienda veto, fugiendaque mando
Ut doceam gestus fœda per acta bonos;
Forsitan haec aliquis jocularia scripta revolvens
His speculum vitæ cernet inesse suae.

He defends himself against the possible harm his book may do, by a principle not flattering to human morals:

Omnia quæ possunt scribi, plerique magistro
Turpia jam nullo facta docente tenent.

From the name (taken from Saxon *Grob*) the title of the Grobians, for coarse, dirty fellows, became common. There was an English verse translation in 1739 which was dedicated to Swift, and it had been preceded by another in 1605. On the whole this later English version, which is free, bears off the palm from the Latin for filth. There is a superficial similarity to his own satire which makes it almost certain that Swift knew the work: but the deeper meaning of his sarcasm, and the lessons on human nature that it contains are, of course, wanting in the verses of Dedekindus.

Efforts so vigorous as these told of the old power, that for thirty years had "inflamed nations," and that could on occasion be re-awakened and shake off its lethargy. But Swift felt that the end of his activity was near. The thought was none the more welcome because he knew that his genius had not always been turned to the best account—that it had often, indeed, been wofully wasted. Now it was less in his power than ever to guide his work into the proper channel, to concentrate his energies, or to keep himself from straying into trifles. "His imagination," he tells Pope, "was ever at fisticuffs with his judgment." At one time he would be stung to compunction at the trifles on which he was engaged; at another, he flung all such prudence to the winds, and diverted his gloom by trivialities which he knew would live only to damage his reputation.

It was perhaps this very sense of waning powers that led him to busy himself now in putting into shape some fragments that lay by him, and in revising with something of personal care the new edition of his works which Faulkner began to issue in 1735. Swift's part in that edition has been doubted and even denied; but there can be little hesitation, in spite of his natural disclaimers, in holding it to be that which received most of his own revision.* The state of the copyright law between England and Ireland, was such, that Faulkner, had he been so minded, might have published the edition without the leave of Swift; and some of Swift's own expressions would lead us to suppose that this was done.† When Motte, his

* This is indeed distinctly stated in a note by Deane Swift to a letter of Lord Oxford (Aug. 8, 1734). "These were the first four volumes in octavo which were actually revised and corrected by Swift himself, as indeed were afterwards the two subsequent volumes, printed by Faulkner in 1738." This is confirmed by internal evidence, though denied by some subsequent editors.

† *Swift to Motte*, Nov. 1, 1735, "Mr. Faulkner in printing these volumes did what I much disliked and yet what was not in my power to hinder; and all my friends pressed him to print them, and gave him what manuscript copies they had occasionally gotten from me."

London bookseller, remonstrated, Swift disclaimed all responsibility. It may well be, that he had some unwillingness to let an edition appear under his auspices, when he had enjoyed the freedom of anonymity so long. But when the publication was resolved upon, he probably thought it best to acquiesce, and to do what he could, at least through his friends, to secure its correctness. It did not, certainly, forfeit, for Faulkner, the friendship of the Dean; and not long after we find him using a letter of introduction from Swift to Pope and Barber. A year later we find Swift defending Faulkner's action to Motte, as a fair reprisal on the oppressive trade policy of England, and as an offence "neither against the laws of God, nor of the country he lives in," and therefore no sin. It is tolerably certain, then, that the edition is Swift's own. He even wrote for it Gulliver's introductory letter to Sympson. To him was probably due the omission of the *Tale of a Tub*, which was notoriously his own, but about which it pleased him to keep up a mystery more complete than about any of his other works.

During this same year a curious, though trifling, literary trouble came to annoy Swift. Perhaps with some further thought of her necessities, he had sent over to Mrs. Barber the manuscript of his *Rhapsody on Poetry* and of his *Poem to a Lady who had asked him to write on her in the heroic style.* The latter poem defended his method of scourging vice by humour and ridicule, rather than by the weight of serious denunciation. He refused to pitch his wit in a higher strain, and shewed how well fitted his looser style had been to scourge the vices of a corrupt Ministry. Like the red rag to the bull, the mere thought of the Ministry had roused Swift's indignation. As he makes his interlocutor in the poem say:

> Mention courts, you'll ne'er be quiet
> On corruptions running riot.

To point his description of his own satiric method, Swift drags in a reference to Walpole, under the transparent nick-

name of Sir Robert Brass. Strangely enough, for one usually so hardened against attack, Walpole seems to have thought the poem worthy of prosecution; and though the matter was soon dropped, both Mrs. Barber, as the person responsible for the lines, and Motte and Lawton Gilliver, as concerned in the publication, were subjected to examination before the Privy Council. If we may gather anything from an obscure reference to the circumstances in Mr. Pilkington's Memoirs,* Matthew Pilkington seems to have been concerned in betraying the Dean's authorship to the Government. This ill-judged show of irritation did not tend to reconcile the Dean to Walpole's dealing with literature, which, to indifference, seemed thus inclined to add repression.

Oppressed by deep-rooted discontent with the state of affairs, stricken by the loss of friends and by his own ill-health, conscious that his powers were passing with their harvest not fully reaped, Swift sank from apathy to complete silence. Another of his old friends passes away in Peterborough, the "hangdog whom Swift loved dearly." A new election only confirms Walpole's power. Every circumstance was tortured by Swift into a new reason for despair. "You are to look upon me," he says to Pope, "as one going very fast out of the world." He seemed to himself stranded in a world where corruption was to rule, where liberty was dead, and where even personal independence was gone. In 1736, Bolingbroke retired to France; and his retirement, the mixed effect of baffled intrigue, diminished resources, and possible apprehension of prosecution, was magnified by his friends, and by Swift amongst them, into a dignified scorn for the miry ways of English politics. Swift and Pope seemed to themselves to be left alone, to struggle against the universal decay around them. Very few of the old circle remained. Erasmus Lewis was still lingering in his former haunts, nursing a wife who was sink-

* Vol. I. p. 171.

ing into the grave. Lord Masham was now obscure in station: he had buried, in 1734, the wife of whose health Swift had once spoken as a thing on which the fate of empires hinged: and his son was vexing his old age by misconduct. It would have been but a melancholy journey for Swift even had his health now permitted the attempt, to have come back to London to find the very shadows of the past forgotten.

Through his kinsman, Deane Swift, who was now at Oxford, Swift renewed his acquaintance with William King, the witty Principal of St. Mary Hall.* It was through King that he endeavoured to arrange for the publication of the *History of the Four Last Years of the Queen*. By the aid of the Journal to Stella, Swift had revised the history, which he had written at Windsor in 1712, and its publication may have seemed to him a means of reviving scenes whose memory was so pleasant. The project excited alarm amongst all those concerned. Lewis, the old official, dreaded the revelations which the history might make. Lord Oxford, who, as the son of Swift's old patron, had a right to be heard, eagerly pressed him to refrain from publication. Bolingbroke had read it, but was not favourable. King endeavoured to temporize and dissuade, and ultimately Swift abandoned the intention for a time. But he did so with some ill-will. It is easy to see why, in old age and ill-health, he should have been anxious to tell the story of those times, when "he was a part of all that he had known." But, with something of disgust, he threw aside the scheme, and left the publication for a later hand. †

* Not to be confounded with the William King of Swift's younger days, whose rough criticisms Swift had repaid by procuring for him the post of Gazetteer.

† For arguments establishing the authenticity of the work published in 1758, see Appendix III.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CLOSING SCENE.

1738—1745.

ÆTAT. 71—78.

Added gloom and loneliness of Swift's later years—Removal and death of Sheridan—Increase of disease—Waste of bodily strength—Longing for death—Swift and Samuel Johnson—A fruitless request—Swift's interest in his last literary ventures—A final struggle for his Church—Clouds and thick darkness—Pope's dishonesty to Swift—The publication of the letters—The last glimmerings of reason—Outbursts of violence—Curators appointed—Wilson and his insults—The crisis of the disease—The long struggle over—The repose of apathy—Death in life—The final seizure—The end—The nation's grief—Estimate of Swift's character and genius.

ALREADY Swift had lost almost all his old associates, and loneliness was now added to his other burdens. Revered by the Dublin mob, who were ready to obey his orders as those of a dictator; regarded, if not with liking, at least with awe and respect, even by the governing class in Ireland; troubled no longer by the gnawing cares of poverty—Swift yet wanted, now more than at any other time of his life, the solace of a friend. Delany, with whom he had much pleasant intercourse, and between whom and Swift there were many sympathies in common, was drawn away from Swift by his keen worldly wisdom, and by his prudent inclination to make friends of the powers that were. The truest, the kindliest, the easiest of Swift's later friends had been Sheridan; but Sheridan, too, was soon lost to him. The story of the breach tells us something of Swift's later mood. Much as he was attracted by Sheridan's careless bonhomie, Swift had seen its dangers, and warned him of them

with more sincerity than was used by kindlier-seeming friends. When the endowed school of Armagh fell vacant, Swift not only procured the offer of the appointment for Sheridan, but also strongly urged him, trying as the parting would have been to Swift himself, to accept a post which would secure a safer provision than that of his Dublin school, and which was removed from the temptations of Dublin life. Other friends, more prone to flattery, and more careless of Sheridan's future, persuaded him to refuse an offer which would have removed from their midst one whose extravagant hospitality they enjoyed: and the result was that Sheridan waited on, to find his income lessening, his family and his expenses increasing; and was at length obliged to accept the much less profitable post of master of Cavan School. When he left Dublin, the Dean, to use his own words, found "his right hand gone." The two had fitted one another in all those lesser offices of friendship that do so much to make life run smooth. Sheridan changed the bright society of Dublin, the comforts of an ample income, the close intimacy of Swift, for the dreariness of Cavan, the drudgery of a smaller post, the burden of debt, and the torment of a shrewish wife. The Dean was left without the friend who might best have soothed his passage through old age, to death. The loneliness became more marked, the gloom more abiding and more deep.

During the few years that followed, there had been some attempt at intercourse between the friends. The Dean went to Cavan; and Sheridan spent his vacations at the Deanery. But a friendship such as theirs could only subsist if constant. All the little allowances that had to be made, all the concessions to the temper, the caprices, or the weaknesses of one another, ceased to be endurable when the soothing aid of habit was removed. The younger Sheridan, then only a boy of fourteen or fifteen, professes to remember some incidents of the Dean's last visit to his father at Cavan. He was fretful, morose and capricious: his parsimony was exaggerated: his pride was

offended by a jesting repartee: and the proffered compliments of Cavan he rejected with disdain. Disease, and loneliness, and gloom, had told heavily on Swift: and without accepting implicitly all that the younger Sheridan tells us of his morose temper, and capricious anger, we may yet believe that the old friends found that a few months of absence had made each less fitted for the other. The "fierce indignation," that had torn so many of Swift's enemies in the past, was rending his own soul now. On the other hand, Sheridan, seeing the decay that was taking hold of Swift, seemed inclined to act as his Mentor, and doubtless from kindly motives, to assume the office which is, of all others, most likely to strain the bonds of friendship. Years before, Swift had begged Sheridan to warn him when he might seem to fall under the sway of that avarice that often comes, or increases, with old age. Sheridan fulfilled the request with more fidelity than tact. Swift listened to the recital of his own weaknesses. He knew their reality: but the time was past when he might look with boldness on the picture, or feel the gratitude due for the advice. "Did you never read Gil Blas?" he asked Sheridan. The words were significant of what Swift felt: that he was rightly rebuked, but that the rebuke came too late to do aught but break their friendship. They saw one another no more; and a few months removed for ever the friend whose kindliness had not been proof against the bitterness which age, ill-health, and disappointment had bred in Swift.

The year which followed was one, not of gradual, but of rapid, decay. Disease had long been there: but old age was now opening the way for its fiercer inroads. The strong brain that had so long resisted the attack, was now too weak to maintain the struggle: memory was going: the tenacity of his clear logic had dwindled into the loose and broken peevishness of senility. The decline into absolute ruin was quick and striking: but we can, nevertheless, trace with some certainty the separate stages in that downward course. Even when

worsted in the fight, Swift yet retains that which is the greatest of his characteristics in his prime, his grim earnestness: even when the struggle is over, and the strong man lies defeated, he yet preserves his dignity, in absolute decay.

In the years 1738 and 1739, he still struggles against his fate. This is the time of the direst and most prolonged torture. The body suffers first. As if to tame the indomitable will, to drive into submission the passion of anger that was too strong for him, he strove to pursue a regimen that only aggravated the disease. He was restless in physical exercise. He wore his body to skin and bone, and even when he could not venture beyond his own house, he sought for violent exercise by hurrying up and down the stairs of the Deanery, or pacing through his empty rooms. He refused, Delany tells us, to use spectacles: and so wore out his sight as to lose the solace of reading. He seemed above all things afraid of sinking into the feebleness of old age: determined, as it were, to wear out quickly, by strained effort, the vital energies whose gradual decay might be prolonged and pitiful. "There is no such thing," said he to a friend, who had praised an old man, "as a fine old gentleman: if the man had a mind or body worth a farthing, they would have worn him out long ago." His efforts were hopeless, and in the struggle, the mind suffered with the body. His misanthropy was exaggerated into a disease. His anger with his kind, his indignation at wrong, burned in upon him with the torture of physical pain; and doubtless it magnified, by imagination, that on which it fed.

The only desire now left to Swift was for death. When he parted from a friend it was with the expressed hope that they might never meet again.* When a large pier-glass fell one day on the spot where the Dean had been speaking to a friend a few minutes before, he met the congratulations on his escape only by a regret—"I wish the glass had fallen upon me." For years he had marked the anniversary of his birth by reading the

* Deane Swift's *Essay*, p. 217.

third chapter of the book of Job, praying that the day whereon he was born might be darkness: that he might have lain still and been quiet: "then had I been at rest." The anniversary, so sad for him, was kept with rejoicing by the mob of Dublin. The shouts of the Kevin Bail echoed through the lonely rooms of the deanery: but it was an incense that he now refused: "'Tis all folly," he said, when told of the rejoicings: "better let it all alone."

Tortured in mind and body, Swift still maintained a firm front against the inevitable encroachments of decay. His final insanity was of a peculiar kind. According to the most recent and most careful medical analysis, it was no slowly developing disease of the brain itself, gradually deepening from partial into confirmed insanity. Until the actual injury came to the brain, Swift, however morbid his mood, however bitter his cynicism, and however unmeasured his anger, was as far from insanity as could be conceived. Structural malformation was there, affecting the nerves of the ear, and producing giddiness and deafness, which often rendered life a torture. It was not, however, till his waning strength left his brain at the mercy of physical disease, and not till a paralytic stroke had supervened, that the eclipse of reason, which he had long dreaded, actually came. His enemies were planted too near the citadel of reason to permit him to forget the probable end of their attack: but till that citadel fell, the reason itself was unimpaired. Even yet, although decay was already breaking down his defences, he still strove to hold his place among men: still gathered round him the intimates who yet remained, and carried on, as best he might, some fragments of conversation with them. But the conversation was broken and tangled: the memory had failed, the perception was confused and blunted.* He still continued to transact busi-

* In one of the unpublished letters in Lord Cork's MSS. we have a detailed account of this. "In August and September, 1739, his memory was still in such a condition that by the assistance of an intimate friend, who

ness: after the last of these years he revised his will: and he did not forget the small offices of kindly interference for his friends which are like bright spots amid the gloom of his misanthropy. But he felt himself, and expressed, even at times with a sort of melancholy humour, the decay that was creeping over him. "I have been many months," he writes to Lord Orrery,* "the shadow of the shadow of the shadow of etc. etc. of Dr. Swift. Age, giddiness, deafness, loss of memory, rage, and rancour against persons and proceedings—I have not recounted the twentieth part—*I nunc et versus tecum meditare canoros.*"

It was in the year 1738, when his friend Pope, at the height of his fame, was still following up the *Dunciad* and the *Epistles* with new efforts, and when Swift, weary and worn with the fight, was sinking to his rest, that an incident, interesting rather for what it might have been, than for what it was, occurred. A new genius, not unlike Swift in mood, not far removed either from Swift or Pope, in political sympathy, was rising in our literary horizon. After a youth of hardship, of self-distrust, of angry discontent, of almost hopeless struggle, Samuel Johnson had now achieved a success of a kind with his *London*. It had brought him some little fame: but it had not given him the wherewithal to rise above poverty: and now at twenty-nine, he was tied hand and foot as a bookseller's drudge, holding nobly to his work, and withal, not unwilling to profit by such patronage as might fall to his lot; ignorant as yet how ill his own spirit was to suit the conditions on which such

was acquainted with the current of his politics and conversation, so far as they regarded his own times, he could have entertained with pleasure any stranger whatever, but not without the help of such an assistant: for, in the rapidity of his discourse, his memory would frequently fail him: yet by turning to his friend, and asking him with a seeming carelessness, 'What was I going to say?' he would, upon the least hint, recollect his ideas." (Transcript of letter from Deane Swift to Lord Orrery, amongst Lord Cork's MSS.)

* *Swift to Lord Orrery*, February 2nd, 173$\frac{8}{7}$ (Lord Cork's MSS.).

patronage was granted. He had fixed his thoughts on a very humble ambition: and strangely enough it seemed either to himself or a friend that Swift might help him to realize his object. The letter which was written so as to reach Swift must tell its own tale:—

LORD GOWER TO A FRIEND OF DEAN SWIFT.

TRENTHAM, *Aug.* 1, 1738.

SIR,

Mr. Samuel Johnson (author of *London*, a satire, and some other poetical pieces) is a native of this country, and much respected by some worthy gentlemen in this neighbourhood, who are trustees of a charity school now vacant: the certain salary is £60 a year, of which they are desirous to make him master; but, unfortunately he is not capable of receiving their bounty, which *would make him happy for life*, by not being a Master of Arts; which, by the statutes of the school, the master of it must be.

Now these gentlemen do me the honour to think that I have interest enough with you, to prevail upon you to write to Dean Swift, to persuade the University of Dublin to send a diploma to me, constituting this poor man Master of Arts in their University. They highly extol the man's learning and probity: and will not be persuaded that the University will make any difficulty of conferring such a favour upon a stranger, if he is recommended by the Dean. They say he is not afraid of the strictest examination, though he is off so long a journey: and will venture it, if the Dean thinks it necessary: choosing rather to die upon the road, *than be starved to death in translating for booksellers*, which has been his only subsistence for some time past.

I fear there is more difficulty in this affair than these good-natured gentlemen apprehend, especially as their election cannot be delayed longer than the 11th of next month. If you see this matter in the same light as it appears to me, I hope you will burn this, and pardon me for giving you so much trouble about an impracticable thing; but, if you think there is a probability of obtaining the favour asked, I am sure your humanity, and propensity to relieve merit in distress, will incline you to serve the poor man, without my adding more to the trouble I have already given you, than assuring you that I am, with great truth, sir,

Your faithful servant,

GOWER.

The application came to nothing: and the fears that Lord Gower expresses of its hopelessness were probably well-founded. Even had such a grant been possible, it seems un-

likely that Swift would either have been a suitor to the authorities of Dublin University, or that his recommendation would have been very favourably accepted by them. That the failure of a request, conveyed so indirectly as this, formed any part of the ground for Johnson's prejudice against Swift, is absolutely without foundation. A far more likely, and, indeed, a far more worthy cause of that prejudice was the very similarity of temperament. Genius is not prone to make allowances. Its possessors are not drawn to one another because they are alike in their haughtiness, in their cynicism, in their intolerance. Johnson knew, and shrank from, the bitterness that was bred in Swift as it was in himself, of hardship, of early poverty, of disappointed hopes, and of the ceaseless burden of ill-health. He had struggled too long against the fatal influences, not to know and dread their strength; and just in proportion as the effort to school himself was painful, so his judgment on another suffering from the same enemy, was severe. Even if Swift neglected to afford aid which it was in his power to bestow, the neglect was one entirely impersonal to Johnson. Swift knew nothing of him: he could not have read his poem: he could have borne no grudge against its author. Had the benefit been conferred, it might have constrained Johnson to a more lenient judgment: that it was not, could scarcely have given to his judgment its severity.

While the power to work, and even to think, is passing away from him, it is strange to find Swift dwelling, with something of senile weakness, on the fate of the latest products of his pen. More than once he asks after the manuscript of the *Polite Conversations*. He is vexed about the repression of his *History*. He is eager about the small addition that might, by this or that work of his old age, be brought to his fame, and how they might swell his store of savings.* We have Swift's own word for it that

* He writes, as he tells Lord Orrery, "to increase my reputation: and besides I should have been glad to have seen my small fortune increased by some honest means" (*Swift to Lord Orrery*, February 2nd, 173$\frac{8}{7}$. Lord Cork's MSS.).

never, except on one occasion, when Pope arranged matters for him,* had he been a gainer by his writings. When, on another occasion, one of his pieces was deliberately published for gain, it was only that he might thereby aid poor Mrs. Barber, in poverty and ill-health. Now, in old age and decay, when his possessions were far greater than his utmost needs, he sought by this unwonted means, to increase them; partly, it may be, from the mere obstinate tenacity with which old age pursues an object on which it has concentrated all its energy: but we are surely entitled to say, partly from the not unworthy motive of making greater his last gift to the country for which he had toiled so bravely, even under the tragic gloom of his own life.

Before his life's work closed, it is characteristic of Swift, that one of his latest struggles was for his Church. The fidelity with which he had clung to her cause, did not desert him at the last. A contest for the representation of Dublin University was impending in the summer of 1739: and the issue lay between one who supported the dominant faction, and one who, as a Tory, was believed to be more friendly to the Church. Swift was convinced that the majority of the Irish House of Commons, if they had their way, would strip his Church of her privileges, and his fellow-clergy of their livelihood. In the *Legion Club* he had shewn what he thought of that House: it was now his object to deal one more blow at their power. The Church candidate was a certain Macaulay: and for him Swift did his utmost. He strove to enlist on his side the Duke of Devonshire, who was then Lord-Lieutenant. His old friend, Richardson, the agent of the Londonderry Society, was employed to prosecute the same object in London. Pope was appealed to on behalf of Macaulay: and finally, through Lyttleton, then "the rising genius of his age," Swift sought to enlist in the cause the sympathies even of the Prince of Wales, who was then Chancellor of the University. Swift's last struggle fails: but it is interesting, not only for the glimpse it

* Probably the case was that of *Gulliver's Travels.*

gives us of his fidelity to his Church, but also as it brings him in old age into contact with the central hope of the band that was to be the harbinger of better things, whose youthful patriotism was to crush out the noisome pollutions of the age: that band, of whom Pope wrote that "with them he would never fear to hold out against the corruption of the world."

A few more friends aided: a few more charities done: a few more groans against the degeneracy of mankind indulged in—and Swift's work was over. Clouds and thick darkness were coming on, and in their midst he descended into the valley of death.

Before we pass to the closing scene, there is one episode of these last years, that gives no pleasing picture of Swift's treatment by professing friends. He was already losing all grasp upon the past, his sense even of the present was as the blurred vision of one whose sight is failing, when his name was dragged into a degrading squabble, pushed on by Pope in one of those freaks of deceitful vanity to which he was so prone. Pope's passion for giving to the world every scrap of his literary work, led him to desire that even the frigid conceits of which his letters were composed,* should not be allowed to perish. The desire was a capricious and morbid one: but still more morbid was the chicanery by which more than once he sought to attain this end. Editions of these letters were concocted, in order to be afterwards indignantly disavowed, at the same time that they served as an excuse for the issue of authorized versions, only, it was to be understood, in self-defence. At a plan of this kind Pope was now working with

* It is scarcely possible, without special study of it, to credit the contemptible artificiality that was current in the so-called friendly letters of Pope's day. These unburdenings of the heart were performed on certain models, embraced certain stock conceits, and turned their expressions of affection after certain fashionable rules. Thus Lord Orrery, in his careful transcripts of his own letters, in Lord Cork's MSS., often adds chapter and verse for his model, and points out the elegance of his own conceits. In this, as in much else, Swift was unlike his age.

even more than his usual trickery. The correspondence between him and Swift had been published with his own connivance in England.* Through his agency a copy found its way to Ireland. Having thus laid the train, he began to scream out against the wrong already done him, and the greater wrong that would be done if a new Irish edition should appear. The Dean, he hinted, careless as to his own fame, indifferent as to his acts, sunk in hopeless imbecility, was being misled by treachery into authorizing what would injure both himself and his friends. All this was meant only to hide Pope's own stratagems to secure publication, and at the same time to give him an opportunity of correcting the letters as he pleased, and of completing the collection. But, meanwhile, Pope professed profound alarm. His affection for the Dean: his fear of the freedom of remark which the letters contained: his pretended ignorance of the printed matter—all were called in aid of this well-simulated panic. But one deceit involves another. Faulkner, who was about to reissue the letters, agrees to abide by Pope's own decision, whatever that might be. With singular deliberation, so as not to interfere with any intention on the part of Faulkner, Pope writes to refuse. In spite of the delay, Faulkner, to Pope's disappointment, submits readily to the refusal. A new ground has then to be chosen. Pope does not believe that suppression is now possible. The folly of the Dean, so he professes to think, the mercenary motives of Mrs. Whiteway, the dishonesty of Swift's friends, have exposed Pope to serious danger. But he will be magnanimous. He is ready to forgive. There is no help for publication: but as the volume must come out, it had better be revised, and the letters still in the Dean's possession had better be added to it. As he goes on, he gets entangled more deeply in the deceit. At one time he writes with strained civility to Mrs. Whiteway: at another time, he accuses her to

* The series of letters which establish Pope's fraud, has been published by Mr. Elwin from the MSS. of Lord Cork, (Pope's Works: *Letters*, Vol. III.).

Lord Orrery of absolute theft. While he is lavishing on Swift expressions of the most endearing friendship, he is bestowing on him, to others, the contemptuous pity which we reserve only for idiocy. He enlists on his own behalf, Lord Orrery, whose chief ambition was for the regard of genius, and who for that reward was ready to lend himself to Pope's dishonesties. The treachery drags on, with all its infinite littleness, for many months, while Orrery and Pope were plying Mrs. Whiteway with alternate threats and promises. The key to the deception has been furnished by Mr. Elwin: and now that it stands exposed before us in all its naked deformity, the only result of the correspondence is to prove the hollow pretences of Pope's friendship, the despicable vanity of the man, and the sincerity of Swift's latest guardian, his cousin Mrs. Whiteway, whose honesty was so unscrupulously attacked. We are glad to turn from the episode, even though it be to the closing scene that now awaits us.

Whatever may be the correct medical theory of Swift's malady,* the story of these last years stands out, in its main features, clearly enough. During 1738 and 1739, as we have seen, the irritation greatly increased: in 1740, it rendered him scarcely capable of seeing strangers; and to his morbid gloom was now added either loss, or absolute confusion, of memory. It was during this year that the miserable wrangle about the correspondence, bred of Pope's vanity and deceit, was dragging on its course: and Swift was as unheeded and unheeding in the midst of the attacks upon him, as if he had been dead. In July of that year, he wrote thus to Mrs. Whiteway, in tones that sound as if uttered on the brink of the grave:

"I have been very miserable all night, and to-day extremely deaf and full of pain. I am so stupid and confounded, that I cannot express the mortification I am under both in body and mind. All I can say is, that I am not in torture: but I daily and hourly expect it. Pray let me know

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* For some discussion of the latest theories as to this, see Appendix, XIII.

how your health is and your family. I hardly understand one word I write. I am sure my days will be very few: few and miserable they must be.

"I am, for those few days, yours entirely,
'JON. SWIFT.

"If I do not blunder, it is Saturday, July 26, 1740."

With broken accents such as these, heard painfully, as it were, through a thick curtain of pain, disease, and baffled memory, Swift's voice drops into silence. The years that follow have little incident: and such as they have, is soon told. During 1741, the decline was rapid: each month made him less fit for the society of his fellows. To the last he sought to carry on his religious exercises: and even when his memory was a blank to all else, his faithful servant, Richard Brennan, told how he still repeated the only part of them he could remember—the Lord's Prayer. Another prayer was also overheard, when he cried in his agony "to be taken away from the evil to come."* In January, $17\frac{4}{4}\frac{2}{1}$, his behaviour, we are told, "was grown perfectly intolerable."† Even poor Mrs. Whiteway, who in the midst of troubles and ill-health of her own, bore gently with the racked spirit longing for rest, but finding none,—even she was forced to visit the Deanery by stealth in order to see that he was cared for. Unseen by him, she watched the Dean, as in his restless agony he paced the room, ceaselessly walking, as she tells us, for ten hours a day. He would eat only when alone: and even after it had been left in his room for hours, his food was often taken away untouched.‡ In March, $17\frac{4}{4}\frac{5}{1}$, guardians were appointed for him, by the Court of Chancery. It was feared that he might lay violent hands upon himself. On one occasion, it was said, he was found threatening his own image in a mirror. When

* Lyon's MS. notes on Hawkesworth's *Life*.

† The expression is taken from the unpublished letter of Deane Swift to Lord Orrery, of March 23rd, 1750, already quoted, which gives the dates of Swift's decline with somewhat more detail than other narratives.

‡ *Mrs. Whiteway to Lord Orrery*, November 22nd, 1742.

his kinsman, Deane Swift, called, he was met only by the words "Go, go!" and yet with the ineffectual relenting of baffled reason, the Dean strove again to speak, and then pointing to his head, could only utter the words, "My best understanding—" and then sink into apathy. During the summer of 1742, he was subjected to gross indignity by a scoundrel who had secured a place in the cathedral, and who attempted to extort from Swift the post of sub-dean, by insults at least, if not by actual violence.*

In this state of absolute gloom, shunning the company of his fellows, escaping from pain only by frenzied physical exertion, and at times breaking out into actual violence, Swift lingered through the summer. In September, 1742, his illness came to an acute crisis. The pressure on the brain produced, or was itself increased by, violent inflammation, which at first extended over his body, and finally settled into a painful abscess in the eye. For weeks his agony was so great that it sometimes required the strength of five men to prevent this enfeebled old man of seventy-three from tearing his eyeball from his head. At length the torture did its work. The swelling in the eyeball sank, and the pain ceased. The last struggle of the long combat was over: and the strong man, so long invincible even in decay, sank into apathy and silence for ever. In this

* The story is told by Faulkner, of this miscreant Wilson having rendered the Dean intoxicated, and then endeavoured by actual blows, while they were driving together, to extort the promise of the place. This story is confirmed by an unpublished letter from Deane Swift to Lord Orrery of 19th December, 1742 (in Lord Cork's MSS.). So serious was the indignation aroused in Dublin that Wilson found it needful to make an affidavit (published by Scott) which ascribed the actual violence to Swift. In Lord Cork's MSS., there is a further affidavit from Richard Brennan, Swift's servant, which gives some countenance to this version, without, however, lessening Wilson's barbarity. Brennan says he was riding behind the carriage, when he heard Wilson demand the sub-deanship. Swift refused: when Wilson began to curse, and in loud tones swore that "no man should strike him." Brennan interfered, and rescued his master by force from the scoundrel's abuse. Even if Wilson's abuse was in answer to some violence offered by old age and imbecility, it scarcely alters the case.

state he spent three years of living death. There was no longer any frenzied resistance to the mental decay. The fierce exercise by which he had striven to defy his torture was now over: he could scarcely be persuaded to move from his chair; and his body, which had shrunk to skin and bone, now recovered its plumpness: the wrinkles left his face, which now, in spite of the thick snow-white hair that overhung it, had an aspect of almost childlike gentleness.* Still, his state was one where the controlling and guiding power was wanting, rather than one of ordinary insanity. He "never talked nonsense nor said a foolish thing." † He was very "quiet and peaceful." He seemed to know old friends—Deane Swift, Mrs. Whiteway, and his housekeeper, Mrs. Ridgway. At times there was some sign of irritation: after a vain attempt to express his meaning, he broke off with the words "I am a fool." Looking at himself in the glass, he was said to have exclaimed in pity, "Poor old man!" When a knife was removed from his reach, he shook his head as if to deprecate the caution, and whispered "I am what I am." On the whole, so far as comfort could be associated with such a state, Swift's last days were peaceful, and even if the story is true, which finds support from the experience of Scott's friend, Lord Kineddar, that the servants admitted strangers to see the living wreck of former greatness, this probably had little effect upon the listless apathy of the Dean. But it is vain to attempt to gauge his state too exactly: we cannot penetrate behind the veil of that mysterious, and withal not undignified silence, nor tell how much of the man's reason was still living, though cut off from all his fellow-men.

* So it is described by Mrs. Pendarves.

† *Deane Swift to Lord Orrery*, April 4th, 1744. Deane Swift adds in another unpublished letter (23rd March, 1750, Lord Cork's MSS.): "Sometimes, perhaps once or twice in a week, he would say two or three words which, as far as could be observed, always carried meaning in the sense of them." Swift seems to have suffered from that form of aphasia, the result of paralysis, which does not prevent the clear utterance of words, but breaks the connexion between the brain and the organs of speech so far, as to make the words no longer answer to the meaning intended.

Before the close came, there seems to have been another short but sharp agony. The epileptic tendency to which so many of the Dean's symptoms point, appears to have broken out fiercely at the last. For thirty-six hours, we are told, he lay in strong convulsive fits. But these passed away: and the final exhaustion came on. The cup of misery, that had been drained to the last dregs, was now taken from his lips. The long struggle, the torture, the morbid restlessness, all he had suffered from himself and from the world were now ended. Death that had lingered so mercilessly, had come at last as if in answer to his prayers.

He died on the 19th of October, 1745. The passion and the earnestness: the cynicism and the tenderness: the strength, the pride, and the prejudice: the stern enmity and the faithful friendship: the stinging sarcasm and the far-reaching humour: the hatred of cant, and the hatred of tyranny—all were hushed for ever. They had made many suffer: but none more direly than their possessor. He had spent his power lavishly: had despised the efforts of lesser men in their thrifty economy of strength: and now he found rest where the bitterness of anger might tear that torn heart no more.

When it became known that the Dean had breathed his last, the nation's love and veneration, hushed to silence during these years of living death, broke out once more. The people crowded to the Deanery, to take a last look of him who had been their idol for five-and-twenty years, to "beg a hair of him for memory," and to pay to him in death that tribute of enthusiastic worship which, living, he had accepted with half-pitying disdain. According to the precise instructions of his will, Swift was buried privately,* on the 22nd of October, at twelve o'clock at night: and, likewise by his own instructions, on a tablet of black marble

* In a letter to the executors, written on the morning of the 22nd, Mrs. Whiteway expressed her fear that Swift's instructions might be too literally interpreted. But they could scarcely have been more express.

over his grave in the cathedral, in "large letters, deeply cut, and strongly gilded," there were inscribed the words—

HIC DEPOSITUM EST CORPUS
JONATHAN SWIFT, S.T.P.
HUJUS ECCLESIÆ CATHEDRALIS
DECANI:
UBI SÆVA INDIGNATIO
ULTERIUS COR LACERARE NEQUIT.
ABI VIATOR
ET IMITARE, SI POTERIS
STRENUUM PRO VIRILI LIBERTATIS VINDICEM.
OBIIT ANNO (1745)
MENSIS (OCTOBRIS) DIE (19)
ÆTATIS ANNO (78).

The amount of his bequest for the Hospital for Lunatics and Incurables was between ten and eleven thousand pounds. By subsequent gifts from others, the endowment was greatly increased: and from 1757, when it was opened, St. Patrick's, or Swift's Hospital, as it was called, continued long to do a work which national effort did not then recognise as its own. To the vicars of Laracor he leaves the tithes of Effernock, "so long as the present Episcopal religion shall continue to be the national established faith and profession in this kingdom." "Whenever any other form of Christian religion shall become the established faith in this kingdom," then the proceeds are to go to the poor of Laracor, always excepting Jews, atheists, and infidels; and even this destination is to be maintained only so long as "Christianity in any shape shall be tolerated among us." Mistress Dingley was to have an annuity of twenty pounds out of the Hospital funds; * pecuniary bequests were made to Mrs. Whiteway, and her sons, and to Mrs. Ridgway, the daughter of his old housekeeper; and other friends, such as Pope,† Delany, the Grattans, Lord Orrery, and Macaulay, were remembered by gifts to which

* Mrs. Dingley did not survive Swift, dying in 1743. Her will, of which the executor was Swift's friend, Mr. Lyon, left nothing to Swift.

† Pope had died during the Dean's unconscious state, on the 30th of May, 1744.

something of interest or of whimsical meaning was attached. Bolingbroke is not named in the will.

LOOKING back over the record of Swift's life, the task remains of forming some estimate of the man and of his genius.

Very early in his career, Swift wrote two letters, which have only recently become accessible, and which for the first time appear in his biography. The following extracts throw a curious light upon his later life. The first is dated 3rd May, 1692.*

"I esteem the time of studying poetry to be two hours in a morning (and that only when the humour fits), which I esteem to be the flower of the whole day, and truly I make bold to employ them that way, and yet I seldom write above two stanzas in a week. I mean such as are to any Pindaric ode; and yet I have known myself to be in so good a humour as to make two in a day, but it may be no more in a week after; and when all done, I alter them a hundred times, and yet I do not believe myself to be a laborious writer: because if the fit comes not immediately I never heed, but think of something else. I have a sort of vanity or foibless, I do not know what to call it, and which I would fain know if you partake of. It is (not to be circumstantial) that I am overfond of my own writings (I would not have the world think so), and I find when I write what pleases me, I am Cowley to myself, and can read a hundred times over. I know 'tis a desperate weakness, and has nothing to defend it but its secrecy, and I know I am wholly in the wrong, and have the same pretence the baboon had to praise her own children."

The second is dated 6th December, 1693.†

"I myself was never very miserable while my thoughts were in a ferment, for I imagine a dead calm is the troublesomest part of our voyage through the world."

The letters from which these are extracts were written to his cousin Thomas Swift, whom the Dean afterwards found

* It is printed in the Hist. MSS. Commissioners' Report, Vol. VII., p. 680.

† Also printed by the Hist. MSS. Commissioners.

reason to despise and ridicule: and it is odd that he, of all men, should have been the recipient of confidences contrasting, at first sight, so strongly with the traits most marked in Swift's later career. The youth, uncertain of his own power, ashamed of, yet morbidly alive to, his own vanity, nervous as to the verdict of others on his work, became the one author of his day whose indifference to the fame which his genius might have brought him was most marked: the aspirant after "ferment," sank into his grave wearied out with many a long fight, and seeking there a calm which his own life had never yielded to him. But strange as the words at first appear from the pen of Swift, they throw such light on his biography, as to make us long for more of these early confidences. They show how soon the power of self-inspection came, and how pitiless it was; they explain the anxiety with which each work was thrown out, under such disguise as was possible; they testify to that inherent restlessness which, even in old age, made him feel "a dead calm" more irksome than the fiercest strife. But these hints of early doubt, and effort, and satisfied achievement, tell us something more. Was there not, in the original bent of that genius, something which the accomplished work of Swift does not contain? We cannot claim for any of his verses the qualities of real poetry. We find in them no flights of imagination: no grandeur either of emotion or of form: and even the deftness of his rhythmical skill never attains to the harmony of poetic utterance. But when we search through the tangled mazes of the Pindaric odes: when we watch their tensity and earnestness in the light of these early confidences: when we place side by side with them the fierce energy of the later verses,—evident as is the severe repression therein of any poetic fancy,—we feel that Swift, though he never attained to true poetic utterance, had a temperament, which in his own words, was "blasted with poetic fire." The fire was indeed checked by untoward experiences, smothered under a burden of contending faculties, and done to death. But how much of

Swift's cynicism, how much of his waste of power, how much of his apparent indifference to fame, was due to the withering of those early aspirations, and to the repression of a temperament of surpassing keenness, forced to utter itself only in the language of satire, and not of poetry?

We must not forget this early impulse in judging of Swift's later work, with its union of contrasting qualities. By nothing did he affect men more than by his marvellous combination of the grimmest earnestness with the most mocking humour. The two are ever at combat, but the combat is maintained on almost equal terms. The mocking laugh never sounds without telling of the earnestness behind; the fury of denunciation never speaks but as the humour rules it, and with such sense of repression as doubles its effect. In himself Swift seems to sum up the two instinctive tendencies ever striving for the mastery in the thoughts of humanity—the tendencies which seem to make of life what he has called it, "a ridiculous tragedy."

Such is the ruling feature of Swift's work. It repeats itself in an idiom which, to use his own words, is "his own English" as no man's ever was. Free from all tricks and peculiarities, it holds to its purpose with absolute directness and lucidity. It has no balanced periods; no ornaments; even grammatical regularity is sometimes wanting. But with dramatic nicety it suits the character in which he speaks, and he bends it to his purpose with the unconscious skill with which a well-trained fencer turns his foil.

Besides his strength of idiom, besides his combined earnestness and humour, Swift has another power as rare. It is that of presenting thought in lucid metaphor or allegory sustained through a long train of implicit reasoning. It is by such travesty of metaphysics that he avenged himself on what seemed to him the wordy triflings of philosophy; and it is this which gives at once its chief subtlety, and much of its interest, to his most characteristic work.

In the verse of Swift's mature years we strike upon a vein

quite different from his prose. It astonishes us by its varying range, from the lightness of sportive fancies to the grim earnestness of the *Rhapsody on Poetry;* by the combined perfection and simplicity of its workmanship; by the accuracy with which it hits its mark. But only in isolated passages does it show Swift's power at its highest. For the rest, it seems to be thrown to the world not as the best product of its author's genius, but as all that his cynicism would permit him to give, as the utmost freedom with which his poetic faculty could be indulged.

From the salient features of Swift's genius, we pass naturally to the marked traits in his character. Here, too, we find the same contradiction. It is built upon a double foundation of keen sensitivity and fierce indignation, that give to his life at once its interest and its mystery. Others might smooth down contending forces by conventional rules; in Swift the forces were too keen to be held in check, the combat too lasting to permit of words of peace.

Two sets of conditions affected the development of a character thus strangely framed. Born to poverty, nursed in dependence on a grudging charity, entering upon the world under ungenial and chilling patronage, Swift's experience was the worst possible for such a character as his. And he lived a slave to strange physical conditions. With a physique so powerful as to prompt him to ceaseless exertion; with a disease that caused life-long torture and threatened an end still worse; with an intellectual fierceness that made his physical temperament seem cold,—Swift could feel only that he was not as other men.

This made him above all things a lonely man. Partly he misunderstood his fellow-beings; partly, with the abnormal distinctness of vision of the solitary, he saw clearly what to other men was hidden, by social habit, in a healthy and convenient blurredness of perception. The infinite littleness of humanity; the endless and hopeless reign of disorder and injustice: the

ludicrous incongruity between principle and practice—all lay exposed before him as a night-mare from which he found no escape. The degrading conditions of physical existence obtruded themselves before him with disgusting plainness. He could not save himself from seeing with an unveiled accuracy: but the vision was for all practical purposes as unhealthy and as unsympathetic as that of one whose gaze has been too long fixed upon a microscopic lens.

It was this loneliness that produced his harsh and yet unconscious trampling upon feelings which he did not share. The abnormal coarseness that stains his work, and on which it would be waste of time to dwell, has its root in this apathetic callousness. Not once is he guilty of the deliberate pandering to lewdness which stains the pages of Pope: the noisomeness has for him no attraction: he dwells upon it only because it is one side of the picture that makes humanity loathsome in his eyes.

The same absence of sympathy with his fellow-men explains the unconscious irreverence with which he often treats religion. Strict as was the discipline that Swift imposed on himself, yet the greater part of the world of ordinary religious ideas was a region where there was no resting-place for him. Unquestionably Swift's was a nature, in the highest sense, religious: and in the passionate earnestness with which he forces himself to conform to the conventional religious creed, there is something of a longing to escape from his loneliness and solitude to the kindly ways of men.

Behind the veil of that inner religion, of which Swift, like all men who are framed after his type, bore the secret in his own heart, we cannot hope to penetrate. But his inability to appreciate the religious feelings which his own words might irritate, in no way rendered him the less strict in his avowed adherence to his Church and its creed. What that creed involved to him, we cannot know. But that he held to it with rigid firmness, that he permitted himself no conscious relaxa-

tion from it, that he would have repelled any suggestion tending to diminish its authority, is as certain as anything can be. He had, indeed, a curious dread of exposing his religious exercises to the world. He read prayers to the servants of his household, but concealed this from his visitors: he attended early services in London, in order that he might escape the observation of the world on his devotions.* He concealed this, much as he would have concealed an act of charity. On the other hand, he made no secret of his creed: and the very fact of its open avowal shews us that he considered such orthodoxy not as a positive merit, but as the natural result of his mental bias, and as harmonizing with the political attitude which he had assumed.

Swift was scrupulous about entering the Church as a mere means of livelihood. His scruples may have proceeded as much from pride as from conscience: but, be that as it may, when he did adopt her orders, he bound himself to practise the discipline of a sentinel at his post. According to Delany, Swift was wont to speak of his early hopes of attaining such ecclesiastical eminence as might prompt men occasionally to ask the sexton on a Sunday morning, "Pray, does the doctor preach to-day?" The reminiscence had more of sarcasm in it than Delany seems to perceive: but it was with all earnestness that Swift strove to fulfil his clerical duties, and with real regret that he found how his political battling had turned his sermons into pamphlets. If he felt doubts as to the dogmas of the Church, he never permitted himself to utter them. "The want of a belief," he says, "is a defect which ought to be concealed when it cannot be overcome." In what way he held that dogma, what it really represented to his inmost soul, how far its acceptance was a part of that refusal to follow the mazes of metaphysical speculation to which he steadfastly adhered, were questions which Swift probably never asked himself, and to which the world can find no answer. The

* *Delany's Observations*, p. 44.

self-repression was the easier because it suited with his contempt for the affectations of current scepticism, with his impatience of the claims to free thought advanced by those who "could no more think than fly." For their complacent rationalism he had no tolerance: the creed that would shape itself to suit what they called their reason would only lose his sympathy. The same tyranny which he imposed on them he would impose upon himself; unconscious, perhaps, of the independence which his own pride kept in reserve.

Much the same motives penetrated into the political convictions of Swift. By political convictions we understand, of course, something different from the mere phases of his party allegiance. His political creed was built upon the same foundation as his creed in religion, his hatred of abstract reasoning. In his contempt for the metaphysics of politics he anticipated Burke. The expedient was the only rule for the government of men. To dogmatise upon abstract rights, to frame constitutions upon a basis of theoretic justice, was to him only so much solemn trifling, worthy of the sages of Laputa. But the expedient he judged not according to the catch-words of any party, not with any of the limitations of conventional habit. Piercing straight to the heart of a question, impatient of the laboured methods of political platitude and commonplace, he had nothing but contempt for the more timid intellects that refused to accept his conclusions, or to keep pace with his reasoning. Purblind and narrow, they seemed to him steeped to the lips in dishonesty, and he drove home the more keenly against them that tyrannical supremacy that it was his to wield.

This was the central point of his political creed, and in the main it determined his political attitude amid the accidents of party. The point at which he aimed was seldom selected with impartial judgment. Pride, prejudice, anger, or misanthropy too often stepped in and made him choose his line of action in very derision of the opinion of his fellow-men. But once

chosen, no power on earth could bring anything of shiftiness or dishonesty into Swift's pursuit of it. When he first joined the Whigs he did so from the natural bias that his connexion with Sir William Temple and his association with the leading members of the Whig party, together with the virulent factiousness of the Tories, gave to him. But from the first his mouth refused to shape itself to their Shibboleths. The Revolution was not to him valuable as an assertion of the hypothetical terms of the Original Contract. To him it was no epoch in politics, and marked the establishment of no ideal constitution. It was simply an episode, necessary at the moment, shaped by the accidental conditions of the time, and liable to revision whenever that seemed expedient. He believed in no divine mission of the Whigs, and credited them with no monopoly of political prescience. The very care with which he searches for reasons to support the Revolution settlement, proves that its advantages were to him no matter of political axiom, as they were to the orthodox Whig. He never ceased to judge his party, not by their professed principles, but by their acts.

A breach was, from the first, not unlikely: and we admit no imputation against the honesty of Swift, in allowing that personal offence first suggested its occasion. But this would have carried him only a little way had not more cogent arguments come to clinch the change. The Whigs neglected his efforts in the mission with which he had been entrusted. But he soon found that their neglect extended to the Church, whose sworn defender he was. Once begun, the breach became rapidly wider. Swift could not rest half-way. In escaping from the bonds of one party, he seemed to be breaking down what had long been to him an irrational and artificial fiction which it suited the exigencies of professional politicians to preserve. The change did not precede, it lagged after, his inclination. But once it was made, he found new vices in his former associates day by day. He saw, or fancied he saw, the insincerity of their specious claims to be the maintainers of

toleration and of liberty: he saw their encouragement of the latitudinarianism which his soul abhorred—partly because it satisfied those whom he despised, partly, perhaps, because it did *not* satisfy uneasy doubts which he strove to hide from himself: he saw the oligarchical monopoly that the Whigs had drawn out of the Revolution. The Tories had been violent, factious, and forgetful of all judgment in the maintenance of impossible extremes: but Swift forgot or condoned their faults for the support they gave his Church, for the opposition they maintained to the abstract political theories on which the Whigs based their claim to virtue. When he broke his long silence to speak on behalf of Ireland, the keynote of all his denunciations was the repudiation of those specious "maxims" by which it was sought to experiment upon her woes—"maxims" which his knowledge of Ireland told him, were there "controlled."

Great as his influence must necessarily have been, this predominant bias in his opinions enhanced it. It gave directness and force to his arguments: it made his convictions for the time part and parcel of himself, held with the tenacity of personal traits, of which he seemed no more able to divest himself than to cast off his own being. Cavil and paradox have sought to minimize the hold which Swift had upon men of his own time. He exaggerated, it has been said, his own influence with the government of Harley: he was never really trusted in the conduct of affairs: he mistook the fair speeches by which his help as a government hack was conciliated, for confidences and deference paid to an adviser and a guide. To such fancies history gives the lie. It was not merely help that his so-called patrons sought from Swift: it was to him they looked to shape their policy, to write out their credentials to the people, to interpret for them the history of their time. More than this, no man in England had before appealed to such a constituency as that aroused by Swift: for the first time a mass of opinion beyond the purview of Court and

Parliament was asked to judge between the merits of parties. In Ireland he stirred a feeling which not even the red hand of rebellion has been able to awaken either before or since. He anticipated the force of democracy: and he was the first to put into shape that political ideal which has never since failed to find an hereditary line of supporters, that of so-called Tory principles resting upon popular support.

The secret of his after-influence is akin to this. Of all the writers of last century, there is none that remains so much of a living force and personality as Swift. The questions agitated in his day are forgotten; its party struggles and its political theories have passed away: but his genius is for us no mere historic memory. Some reasons for this lie on the surface. We are attracted by the commanding calmness of his humour, with its back-ground of grim earnestness. The mystery and the romance of his life, the story of its love and of its anger, of its pride and of its ruin, can never lose their hold on human interest. Even in the gloom, in the loneliness of one "dwelling in the wilderness," he is intensely English to the very centre of his being.

But beyond and above all this, he commands our attention by the stern earnestness with which he has dealt with problems that are as living for us, as when he wrote. Others have dwelt upon the same problems, have expressed something of the same cynicism, have attempted to denounce in something of his tone. The theme is an old and an inexhaustible one; the "*ludibrium rerum humanarum*" with its tragedy behind, the thought of which makes humour strive to be something more than mockery or laughter, and which gives another aspect to the cynic's sneer. But Swift stands on a different level from all these others, in that, while his humour is never forced or thin, his earnestness never forgets the supreme quality of self-command. He is never, but by implication, a preacher. But were we to choose a name for the one chief topic of his denunciation, it would be that given by Johnson

to the object of his hatred, which he called Cant. A preacher of our own day, with a misanthropy less scathing, but more fretful, than that of Swift, has chosen what might appear a kindred topic in the energy of his invective against Shams. But the Sham is soon fathomed and exposed. Its shell is easily pierced, and the nickname is left to suggest to weak imaginations the depreciation of all that we do not understand. The Shams of one generation are forgotten by the next, or remembered only as the dress in which it pleased our predecessors to masquerade. But who can place bounds to the dominion of Cant? Who can say into what specious theories it does not enter, over what sphere it fails to leave its trail? And yet, though the preacher cannot rid us of it, it must still blanch in all time coming, before the calm irony of Swift's humour, before the relentless tragedy of the picture that his genius has drawn. If his pride was boundless, if his anger was consuming, they have at least left to us a rich inheritance, in the discomfiture which that ever-present foe suffered at his hands.

APPENDICES

I. Fragment of Autobiography

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I.

FRAGMENT OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY

[This fragment, written about 1727, and first printed by Deane Swift, from a copy now in Trinity College Library, is reproduced here with the alterations, which are apparently authoritative, contained in a copy of the MS. to which Mr. Forster had access.]

The family of the Swifts are ancient in Yorkshire. From them descended a noted person, who passed under the name of Cavaliero Swift, a man of wit and humour. He was created an Irish Peer by King Charles the First, 20 March 1627, with the title of Viscount of Carlingford, but never was in that kingdom. Many traditional pleasant stories are related of him, which the family planted in Ireland hath received from their parents. This lord died without issue male; and his heiress, whether of the first or second descent, was married to Robert Fielding, Esquire, commonly called handsome Fielding. She brought him a considerable estate in Yorkshire, which he squandered away, but had no children. The Earl of Eglinton married another co-heiress of the same family.

Another of the same family was Sir Edward Swift, well known in the times of the great Rebellion and Usurpation, but I am ignorant whether he left heirs or no.

Of the other branch, whereof the greatest part settled in Ireland, the founder was William Swift, prebendary of Canterbury, towards the last years of Queen Elizabeth, and during the reign of King James the First. He was a divine of some distinction. There is a sermon of his extant, and the title is to be seen in the catalogue of the Bodleian Library, but I never could get a copy, and I suppose it would now be of little value.

This William married the heiress of Philpot, I suppose a Yorkshire

gentleman, by whom he got a very considerable estate, which however she kept in her own power, I know not by what artifice. She was a capricious illnatured and passionate woman, of which there have been told several instances. And it hath been a continual tradition in the family, that she absolutely disinherited her only son Thomas, for no greater crime than that of robbing an orchard when he was a boy. And thus much is certain, that Thomas never enjoyed more than one hundred pounds a year, which was all at Goodrich, in Herefordshire, whereof not above one half is now in the possession of a great great grandson, except a church or chapter lease which was not renewed.

His original picture was in the hands of Godwin Swift, of Dublin, Esq. his great grandson; as well as that of his wife, who seems to have a good deal of the shrew in her countenance; whose arms as an heiress are joined with his own; and by the last he seems to have been a person somewhat fantastic; for he altered the family coat of arms and gives as his own device, a Dolphin (in those days called a Swift) twisted about an anchor, with this motto, *Festina lente.*

There is likewise a seal with the same coat of arms (his, not joined with the wife's), which the said William commonly made use of; and this was also in the possession of Godwin Swift above mentioned.

His eldest son Thomas seems to have been a clergyman before his father's death. He was vicar of Goodrich, in Herefordshire, within a mile or two of Ross: he had likewise another church living, with about one hundred pounds a year in land (part whereof was by church leases), as I have already mentioned. He built a house on his own land in the village of Goodrich, which by the architecture denotes the builder to have been somewhat whimsical and singular, and very much towards a projector. The house is above an hundred years old and still in good repair, inhabited by a tenant of the female line; but the landlord, a young gentleman, lives upon his own estate in Ireland.

This Thomas was much distinguished by his courage, as well as his loyalty to King Charles the First, and the sufferings he underwent for that prince, more than any person of his condition in England. Some historians of those times relate several particulars of what he acted, and what hardships he underwent for the person and cause of that martyr'd prince. He was plundered by the Roundheads six and thirty, some say above fifty, times.

The author of *Mercurius Rusticus* dates the beginning of his sufferings so early as October, 1642. The earl of Stamford, who had the command of the Parliament army in those parts, loaded him at first with very heavy exactions; and afterwards at different times robbed him of all his books and household furniture, and took away from the family even their wearing apparel; with some other circumstances of cruelty too tedious to relate at large in this place. The Earl being asked why he committed these barbarities, my author says "he gave two reasons for it: first,

"because he (Mr. Swift) had bought arms and conveyed them into "Monmouthshire, which, under his Lordship's good favour, was not so ; "and secondly, because, not long before, he preached a sermon in Ross "upon the text Give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, in which his "lordship said he had spoken treason in endeavouring to give Cæsar "more than his due. These two crimes cost Mr. Swift no less than "£300."

About that time he engaged his small estate, and having quilted all the money he could get in his waistcoat, got off to a town held for the king : where, being asked by the Governor, who knew him well, what he could do for his Majesty, Mr. Swift said he would give the King his coat, and stripping it off, presented it to the Governor ; who observing it to be worth little, Mr. Swift said, Then take my waistcoat, and bid the Governor weigh it in his hand ; who, ordering it to be unripped, found it lined with three hundred broad pieces of gold, which as it proved a seasonable relief, must be allowed an extraordinary supply from a private clergyman of a small estate, so often plundered, and soon after turned out of his livings in the church.

At another time being informed that three hundred horse of the rebel party intended in a week to pass over a certain river, upon an attempt against the cavaliers, Mr. Swift having a head mechanically turned, he contrived certain pieces of iron with three spikes, whereof one must always be with the point upward ; he placed them over night in the ford, where he received notice that the rebels would pass early the next morning, which they accordingly did, and lost two hundred of their men, who were drowned or trod to death by the falling of their horses, or torn by the spikes.

His sons, whereof four were settled in Ireland (driven thither by their sufferings, and by the death of their father), related many other passages, which they learnt either from their father himself, or from what had been told them by the most credible persons of Herefordshire, and some neighbouring counties : and which some of those sons often told to their children ; many of which are still remembered, but many more forgot.

In 1646 he was deprived of both his church livings sooner than most other loyal clergymen, upon account of his superior zeal for the King's cause, and his estate sequestered. His preferments, at least that of Goodrich, were given at first to one Giles Rawlins, and after to William Tringham, a fanatical saint, who scrupled not however to conform upon the Restoration, and lived many years, I think till after the Revolution.

The Committees of Hereford had kept Thomas Swift a close prisoner for a long time in Ragland Castle before they ordered his ejectment for scandal and delinquency (as they termed it), and for being in actual service against the Parliament. On the 5th July 1646 they ordered the profits of Gotheridge (Goodrich) into the hands of Jonath: Dryden minister, until about Christmas following ; and on 24th March they

inducted Giles Rawlins into this parish: who in 1654 was succeeded by Tringham. His other living of Bridstow underwent the same fate. For he was ejected from this on 25th Sept. 1646, and it was given to the curate, one Jonath: Smith, whom they liked better, and ordered to be inducted into his Rector's cure. What became of him afterwards I know not, but in 1654 one John Somers got this living.

The Lord Treasurer Oxford told the Dean of St. Patrick's, the grandson of this eminent sufferer, that he had among his father's (Sir Edward Harley's) papers, several letters from Mr. Thomas Swift writ in those times, which he promised to give to the Dean; but never going to his house in Herefordshire while he was treasurer, and Queen Anne's death happening in three days after his removal, the Dean went to Ireland, and the Earl being tried for his life, and dying while the Dean was in Ireland, he could never get them.

Mr. Thomas Swift died May 2nd 1658, and in the 63rd year of his age. His body lies under the altar at Goodrich, with a short inscription. He died before the return of King Charles the Second, who by the recommendations of some prelates had promised, if ever God should restore him, that he would promote Mr. Swift in the church, and other ways reward his family for his extraordinary services, zeal, and persecutions in the royal cause. But Mr. Swift's merit died with himself.

He left ten sons and three or four daughters, most of which lived to be men and women. His eldest son Godwin Swift, of Goodridge, Co. Hereford, Esq. one of the Society of Gray's Inn (so styled by Guillym in his Heraldry) was called to the bar before the Restoration. He married a relation of the old Marchioness of Ormond, and upon that account, as well as his father's loyalty, the old Duke of Ormond made him his Attorney General in the palatinate of Tipperary. He had four wives, one of which, to the great offence of his family, was co-heiress to Admiral Deane, who was one of the Regicides. She was Godwin's third wife. Her name was Hannah, daughter of Major Richard Deane, by whom he had issue Deane Swift, and several other children.

This Godwin left several children, who have all estates. He was an ill pleader, but perhaps a little too dextrous in the subtle parts of the law.

The second son of Mr. Thomas Swift was called by the same name, was bred at Oxford, and took orders. He married the daughter of Sir William D'Avenant, but died young, and left only one son, who was also called Thomas, and is now rector of Putenham in Surrey. His widow lived long, was extremely poor, and in part supported by the famous Dr. South, who had been her husband's intimate friend.

The rest of his sons, as far as I can call to mind, were Mr. Dryden Swift (called so after the name of his mother, who was a near relation to Mr. Dryden the Poet), William, Jonathan, and Adam, who all lived and died in Ireland. But none of them left male issue, except Jonathan, who

besides a daughter left one son, born seven months after his father's death; of whose life I intend to write a few memorials.

Jonathan Swift, Doctor of Divinity, and Dean of St. Patrick's, was the only son of Jonathan Swift, who was the seventh or eighth son of Mr. Thomas Swift above-mentioned, so eminent for his loyalty and his sufferings.

His father died young, about two years after his marriage: he had some employments and agencies; his death was much lamented on account of his reputation for integrity, with a tolerable good understanding. He married Mrs. Abigail Erick, of Leicestershire, descended from the most ancient family of the Ericks, who derive their lineage from Erick the forester, a great commander, who raised an army to oppose the invasion of William the Conqueror, by whom he was vanquished, but afterward employed to command that prince's forces; and in his old age retired to his house in Leicestershire, where his family hath continued ever since, but declining every age, and are now in the condition of very private gentlemen.

This marriage was on both sides very indiscreet; for his wife brought her husband little or no fortune, and his death happening so suddenly before he could make a sufficient establishment for his family, his son (not then born) hath often been heard to say, that he felt the consequences of that marriage not only through the whole course of his education, but during the greatest part of his life.

He was born in Dublin, on St. Andrew's day, in the year 1667; and when he was a year old, an event happened to him that seems very unusual; for his nurse who was a woman of Whitehaven, being under an absolute necessity of seeing one of her relations, who was then extremely sick, and from whom she expected a legacy, and being at the same time extremely fond of the infant, she stole him on shipboard unknown to his mother and uncle, and carried him with her to Whitehaven, where he continued for almost three years. For, when the matter was discovered, his mother sent orders by all means not to hazard a second voyage, till he could be better able to bear it. The nurse was so careful of him, that before he returned he had learnt to spell; and by the time that he was three years old he could read any chapter in the Bible.

After his return to Ireland, he was sent at six years old to the school of Kilkenny, from whence at fourteen he was admitted into the University of Dublin, a pensioner, on the 24th April, 1682; where by the ill treatment of his nearest relations, he was so discouraged and sunk in his spirits that he too much neglected his academic studies; for some parts of which he had no great relish by nature, and turned himself to reading history and poetry: so that when the time came for taking his degree of bachelor of arts, although he had lived with great regularity and due observance of the statutes, he was stopped of his degree for dulness and insufficiency; and at last hardly admitted in a manner little to his credit, which is

called in that college *speciali gratiâ*, on the 15th February 1685, with four more on the same footing: and this discreditable mark, as I am told, stands upon record in their college registry.

The troubles then breaking out, he went to his mother, who lived in Leicester; and after continuing there some months, he was received by Sir William Temple, whose father had been a great friend to the family, and who was now retired to his house called Moor Park, near Farnham in Surrey; where he continued for about two years. For he happened before twenty years old, by a surfeit of fruit, to contract a giddiness and coldness of stomach that almost brought him to his grave; and this disorder pursued him with intermissions of two or three years to the end of his life. Upon this occasion he returned to Ireland in 1690, by advice of physicians, who weakly imagined that his native air might be of some use to recover his health: but growing worse, he soon went back to Sir William Temple; with whom growing into some confidence, he was often trusted with matters of great importance.

King William had a high esteem for Sir William Temple, by a long acquaintance, while that gentleman was ambassador and mediator of a general peace at Nimeguen. The King, soon after his expedition to England, visited his old friend often at Sheen, and took his advice in affairs of greatest consequence. But Sir William Temple weary of living so near London, and resolving to retire to a more private scene, bought an estate near Farnham in Surrey, of about £100 a year, where Mr. Swift accompanied him.

About that time a bill was brought into the House of Commons for triennial parliaments; against which the King, who was a stranger to our constitution, was very averse, by the advice of some weak people, who persuaded the Earl of Portland that King Charles the First lost his crown and life by consenting to pass such a bill. The Earl, who was a weak man, came down to Moor Park by his majesty's orders to have Sir William Temple's advice, who said much to show him the mistake. But he continued still to advise the King against passing the bill. Whereupon Mr. Swift was sent to Kensington with the whole account of the matter in writing to convince the King and the Earl how ill they were informed. He told the Earl, to whom he was referred by his majesty (and gave it in writing), that the ruin of King Charles the First was not owing to his passing the triennial bill, which did not hinder him from dissolving any parliament, but to the passing of another bill, which put it out of his power to dissolve the parliament then in being, without the consent of the house. Mr. Swift, who was well versed in English history, although he was under twenty-one years old, gave the King a short account of the matter, but a more large one to the Earl of Portland: but all in vain. For the King by ill advisers was prevailed upon to refuse passing the bill. This was the first time that Mr. Swift had ever any converse with courts, and he told his friends it was the first incident that helped to cure him of vanity

The consequence of this wrong step in his majesty was very unhappy; for it put that prince under a necessity of introducing those people called Whigs into power and employments, in order to pacify them. For, although it be held a part of the King's prerogative to refuse passing a bill, yet the learned in the law think otherwise, from that expression used at the coronation, wherein the prince obligeth himself to consent to all laws, *quas vulgus elegerit.*

Mr. Swift having lived with Sir William Temple some time, and resolving to settle himself in some way of living, was inclined to take orders. But first commenced M.A. in Oxford as a student of Hart Hall on 5th July, 1692. However, although his fortune was very small, he had a scruple of entering into the church merely for support, and Sir William, then being Master of the Rolls in Ireland, offered him an employ of about £120 a-year in that office; whereupon Mr. Swift told him, that since he had now an opportunity of living without being driven into the church for a maintenance, he was resolved to go to Ireland, and take holy orders. In the year 1694 he was admitted into deacon's and priest's orders by Dr. William Moreton, bishop of Kildare, who ordained him priest at Christ Church the 13th January that year. He was recommended to the Lord Capel, then Lord Deputy, who gave him a prebend in the north worth about £100 a-year, called the Prebend of Kilroot in the Cathedral of Connor, of which growing weary in a few months he returned to England, resigned his living in favour of a friend who was reckoned a man of sense and piety, and was besides encumbered with a large family. After which he continued in Sir William Temple's house till the death of that great man, who beside a legacy left him the care, and trust, and advantage of publishing his posthumous writings.

Upon this event Mr. Swift removed to London, and applied by petition to King William upon the claim of a promise his majesty had made to Sir William Temple, that he would give Mr. Swift a prebend of Canterbury or Westminster. Col. Henry Sidney, lately created Earl of Romney, who professed much friendship for him, and was now in some credit at court, on account of his early services to the King in Holland before the Revolution, for which he was made Master-General of the Ordnance, Constable of Dover Castle, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and one of the Lords of the Council, promised to second Mr. Swift's petition; but said not a word to the king. And Mr. Swift, having totally relied on this lord's honour, and having neglected to use any other instrument of reminding his majesty of the promise made to Sir William Temple, after long attendance in vain, thought it better to comply with an invitation, given him by the Earl of Berkeley, to attend him to Ireland, as his chaplain and private secretary; his lordship having been appointed one of the Lords Justices of that kingdom, with the Duke of Bolton and the Earl of Galway, on the 29th June, 1699. He attended his lordship, who landed near Waterford; and Mr. Swift acted as secre-

tary the whole journey to Dublin. But another person had so far insinuated himself into the earl's favour, by telling him that the post of secretary was not proper for a clergyman, nor would be of any advantage to one who aimed only at church preferments, that his lordship after a poor apology gave that office to the other.

In some months the Deanery of Derry fell vacant; and it was the Earl of Berkeley's turn to dispose of it. Yet things were so ordered that the Secretary having received a bribe, the Deanery was disposed of to another, and Mr. Swift was put off with some other church livings not worth above a third part of that rich Deanery; and at this present time, not a sixth: namely, the Rectory of Agher, and the Vicarage of Laracor and Rathbeggan in the Diocese of Meath; for which his letters patent bear date the 24th of February following. The excuse pretended was his being too young, although he were then thirty years old.

The next year, in 1700, his grace Narcissus Lord Archbishop of Dublin was pleased to confer upon Mr. Swift the Prebend of Dunlaven in the Cathedral of St. Patrick's, by an instrument of institution and collation dated the 28th of September. And on the 22nd of October after, he took his seat in the Chapter.

From this time he continued in Ireland; and on the 16th of February, 1701, he took his degree of Doctor of Divinity in the University of Dublin. After which he went to England about the beginning of April, and spent near a year there.

He appeared at the Dean's visitation on the 11th of January, 1702; at a chapter held the 15th of April; and at the visitation on the 10th of January, 1703. He attended a chapter on the 9th of August, and the visitation of 8th of January, 1704. He was at two chapters held the 2nd of February and the 2nd of March following, and at the visitation the 7th of January, 1705. Also in April, August, and January, 1706; and in April, June, July, and August, 1707. Set sail for England 28th of November, 1707; landed at Darpool; next day rode to Parkgate; and so went to Leicester first.

He was excused at the visitation in 1707 and 1708; and on the 9th of January 1709 expected at the visitation, but did not come. He spent 1708 in England, and set sail from Darpool for Ireland 29th of June, 1709, and landed at Ringsend next day, and went straight to Laracor. Was often giddy and had fits this year.

He attended a chapter held the 15th February, 1709; also at a chapter 29th July and 11 August, 1710. Excused at the visitation 8th of January, 1710. He was not in Ireland after this till his instalment as Dean on the 13th of June, 1713. On the 27th of August he nominated Dr. Edward Synge to act in his absence as sub-dean; and came no more to Ireland until after the Queen's death. He set out to Ireland from Letcombe in Berkshire August the 16th, 1714; landed in Dublin the 24th of the same month; and held a chapter on the 15th of September, 1714.

APPENDIX II.

NOTE ON THE *TALE OF A TUB*

THE *Tale of a Tub* was first issued in April or May, 1704. During that year three editions appeared (besides those that were pirated, or published in Ireland, where no English copyright was secured by law). In 1705, a fourth edition was issued by John Nutt, who had been the authorized publisher from the first. The demand then fell off, or was met by unauthorized editions: and the next, or fifth, authorized edition was that issued, also by Nutt, in 1710, with the *Author's Apology* prefixed. After this the copyright seems to have passed into the hands of Benjamin Motte and Tooke. In 1711, I find an unauthorized version, without the *Apology:* but the sixth and seventh editions appear only in 1724 and 1727. In 1747, there appeared an eleventh edition, published by Bathurst.

The differences between the editions are very slight, except for a few notes, taken from the adverse critiques of Wotton and others, introduced in the fourth and later editions.

A fact so well ascertained as Swift's authorship of the *Tale*, would not be worth discussion, were it not for the half paradoxical doubt cast on it by Johnson. That doubt clearly arose from Johnson's wish to disparage Swift, by denying the authenticity of his greatest work. But setting aside the overwhelming intrinsic evidence, it may be well to state shortly the proof positive. First, Swift's letter to Tooke (June 29, 1710) is only intelligible as written by the author of the *Tale*. Secondly, in a list of those of his pieces that are suitable for a miscellany, written in his own hand, the *Apology* occurs; and if he wrote the *Apology*, he necessarily wrote the *Tale*. Thirdly, in the Journal to Stella, he clearly refers to it as "*you know what*" which might help him with his new Tory friends. Fourthly, he treasured amongst his papers a letter from a Quaker in Philadelphia, in which the writer thanked him—truly the strangest thanks that any of his sect ever gave—as the author of the *Tale*. So generally accepted did the authorship at length become, that Pulteney in a letter to Swift himself (June 3, 1740) actually names the book in some Latin verses, as one of the manifestations of his genius.

Seu levis a vacuo fabula sumpta cado.

Lastly, in the period of almost speechless apathy which preceded his death, Swift was heard by Mrs. Whiteway to mutter, as he turned over the leaves of the book, "Good God, what a genius I had when I wrote that book!"

APPENDIX III.

THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE *HISTORY OF THE FOUR LAST YEARS OF THE QUEEN*

As is the case with several particulars in Swift's life, doubts, proceeding from what was at first a mere suspicion, have been cast on his authorship of this work: and these doubts have grown until they gave rise to a positive denial. I must begin the discussion of the subject, by expressing my indebtedness to Mr. Elwin, for the evidence and arguments bearing on it which he has enabled me to adduce.

We know for a certainty, from the published correspondence of Swift, that the work, written long before, was revised and sent to Dr. William King, the Principal of St. Mary's Hall, Oxford, for publication in 1737. The bearer of the MS. was Lord Orrery. Swift was deeply interested in the work: but much to his vexation, it was strongly objected to by those who represented the very Ministry whose defence it undertook. Remonstrances came to him from Erasmus Lewis, the old official: from Lord Bolingbroke: and from Lord Oxford as representing his father, the special patron of Swift.

This prevented its appearance at the time; but, in 1758, what claimed to be this work was published by Dr. Lucas, into whose hands a transcript had fallen, and who, while professing it worth publication from its interest and ability, was careful to disclaim any sympathy with the opinions it professed; and who, in particular, strives to exaggerate the dangerous interpretation which might be placed on certain casual words in it.*

The author's preface prefixed to some of the editions, tells us that the treatise was written at Windsor, and that he had resolved to publish it in 1713, but was kept back owing to the alterations desired by Lord Oxford, and Lord Bolingbroke, to which the author refused to submit. This supposes 1712, or early in 1713, as the date of its being written, the narrative beginning in January $17\frac{12}{11}$. Now we know from the Journal, which was not published in 1758, that Swift was at Windsor in September 1712. The supposed forger thus hit upon the truth: and he is further corroborated by the account given in Swift's letter to Lord Oxford of June 14, 1737—which was also unpublished in 1758.

This so-called forgery was published in 1758, and received universally as genuine. It attracted much notice. Dr. King, to whom it had been

* *E.g.*, the use of the phrase "abdicated King" of James II. Had Lucas been forging a subject of accusation against Swift, he would have invented something a little more conclusive of guilt than this careless phrase.

entrusted, lived till 1763: he was a man of letters, yet he published no denial: he was a man widely known, yet he said nothing against it, or we should certainly have had his doubts repeated. Lord Orrery had carried over the MS.: had read the work; and was a man much inclined to literary talk. Yet he also lived till 1762, and never allowed any denial to escape him. Deane Swift, who was at St. Mary's Hall, and intimate with King, tells us that his cousin handed the MS. about in Ireland. Yet no one amongst all these readers of the MS. ever convicted or accused the publication of being a forgery.

This evidence is in itself surely strong enough: and the internal evidence of the piece tells the same way. It is not indeed equal to the great efforts of Swift: no genius is ever equal to himself throughout all his work. But it has conclusive and inimitable marks of Swift's manner in every page: and it has no real marks of forgery. Its resemblances to his style are natural: not of the pronounced and forced type which would certainly have appeared had the forger been at work.

But Mr. Elwin has enabled me to adduce another and almost conclusive piece of evidence. It is the following abstract of the history by the historical collector, Dr. Birch, which is amongst his manuscripts in the British Museum.

"June 30, 1742."

"From y^e^ manuscript of Dr. Swift's History of the last Parliament of Queen Anne: written at Windsor in 1713.

It begins with the characters of Lord Sommers, Lord Godolphin, Lord Sunderland, Lord Wharton, Lord Cowper, Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, Earl of Nottingham, and Duke of Somerset, and Prince Eugene.

Lord Sommers—a man of strong passions, though a great master of them, he frequently discovered great rage in his countenance, at the same time that his words and the tone of his voice were full of softness—extremely civil in his whole behaviour, even in private conversation, though it appeared there like formality; of excellent parts, well cultivated by polite learning, but had no great relish for conversation, spending his leisure hours in thinking and reading, except when he relaxed himself with an illiterate chaplain, an humble friend, or a favourite domestic.

Lord Godolphin, said to be designed for a trade before he was a page at court; faithful to his master King James II. to a degree beyond many persons, who had much greater obligations; corresponded with his queen, and made little presents to her, with the leave of K. William, though he concealed it from her lest she should be offended, and wrote to her in a style of *double entendre*, between *Love* and *Respect*. Had a turn for gallantry, and would write songs to his mistress with a pencil on a card. Had a passion for the Duchess of Marlborough. Negligent of the public accounts, but not corrupt.

Lord Sunderland received his religion, that is, his indifference for any

form of it, from his father, and his politics from his tutor, Dr. Trimnell, afterwards Bishop of Winchester. A Republican in his notions, and so zealously so, while his father was living, that he refused often to be styled lord and chose to be called Charles Spencer, declaring that he hoped to see the time, when the name of a lord should be extinguished. Moderate in his parts, and no scholar either in reality or even in the opinion of the public, notwithstanding his vast library.

Lord Wharton, perfectly indifferent to all real religion, though exclusive of this, in all other respects, a firm Presbyterian. Of great address in the management of elections, and bringing over young men of quality to his schemes by engaging them in his parties of pleasure, but of so prostitute a character, that it was infamous even to be seen with him. By his administration of Ireland liable to an impeachment, at least for high crime and misdemeanours.

Lord Cowper, ignorant in all foreign affairs, as appeared in council, and brought into the high station of Chancellor, without any of the intermediate steps to it, by those who wanted a person in it, that would give no obstruction to any of their designs, though his character was blemished with such irregularities as rendered him by no means a fit keeper of her Majesty's conscience. *A piece* of *a scholar*, and a tolerable logical reasoner, but accustomed to disguise a cause by sophistry and false glosses.

Duke of Marlborough, of good understanding, though absolutely uncultivated by education or study; had a prodigious command of his passions upon all occasions, except after he was dismissed from being general: his character for personal courage doubted by many, though it might justly be supposed consistent with the prudence of a general. Avaricious, and resolved to continue the war for the immense profits he made of it.

Duchess of Marlborough, a woman of unbounded avarice, infinite pride, and ungovernable rage; affecting the character of wit, though supporting it chiefly by the fashionable humour of ridiculing the doctrines of Christianity and religion in general.

Earl of Nottingham declared at first against the Government of K. William, though he afterwards took a post under him—a conduct to be excused only from his numerous family. Took great pains to run down Lord Godolphin and the Junta, but being disobliged by the refusal of the post of Lord President of the Council, became a zealous enemy of the new ministry. His countenance not at all hypocritical, nor unsuitable to his temper. Of very slender acquisitions in learning, and from his facility of speaking persuading himself that he was master of an extraordinary eloquence, and affecting to show it on all occasions.

Duke of Somerset, of immeasurable pride, with a very bad judgment, though at first an enemy to the old ministry, soon quarrelling with the new, because they could not be governed by him; and at last lost his favour with the Queen, which himself and his duchess had gained by the

respect which they showed her Majesty while she was Princess of Denmark.

Prince Eugene, a lover of war, a science in which alone he could make any figure; cruel to a degree, that he would at any time have sacrificed 20,000 men to any point which he had in view; and resolved, while he was in England, to have taken off the Earl of Oxford *à la negligence*, as he styled it, for which purpose he encouraged those parties who did so much mischief in the streets of London in the night.

Lord Oxford's passion, ambition, without pride, cruelty or avarice, and though negligent of his friends' interests on some occasions, yet still more so of his own. Too patient under scandalous imputations, though thoroughly innocent of them. Those thoughts occurred at first to him which long deliberation alone suggests to others.

Mr. Robert Walpole engaged to his party by his absolute indifference to any principles, and secured to them by the loss of his place; whose firmness of countenance, which set him above that infirmity which makes men bashful, and readiness in speaking, made him esteemed by them one of their leaders of the second form.

The history sets forth the reasons of the changes of the ministry, which were—I. Their bad policies in refusing the terms offered by the King of France at Gertruydenberg, and imposing such upon him as neither that monarch nor his kingdom would submit to, and which, being published by him, united all his subjects in a resolution to support him at all hazards, and with the sacrifice of their whole property, and particularly the clergy, who offered to melt down their consecrated plate for that purpose. II. Their principles with regard to government and religion, which were extremely disagreeable to her Majesty. III. And the superior way in which they dictated to her upon all occasions, and the shocking treatment which she received from the Duchess of Marlborough. IV. That among other instances of ill-conduct they were highly blameable in inviting over so vast a number of Palatines, an useless idle body of men, from whom we could expect no advantage: upon which occasion Dr. Swift examines in what sense a nation may be said to be richer for the number of its inhabitants.

That the Dutch were clandestinely treating with the French on their own separate account.

Reflections on Buys the Dutch Minister, and the whole Dutch nation.

Reflections on the French nation, with an invective against the injustice of their Salic Law.

Abusive character of Count Bothmar, whose memorial he says in the first draught to have been unknown to his master, though in his correction of that pasage he seems to suppose it was known.

The history ends with the peace of Utrecht."

Now, in the first place, this abstract, which is in Dr. Birch's own hand-

writing, is dated in June, 1742,—nearly three years before the death of Swift. It was clearly taken from a manuscript *substantially* identical with that from which the book was published in 1758. We might, indeed, guess that the MS. which Lucas followed had received some alterations and additions as compared with that which Birch's abstract sums up. But this apparent discrepancy actually helps to establish the genuineness of the book: for Birch says his abstract was taken from *the* manuscript, meaning thereby, as we must reasonably infer, the manuscript written by Swift himself. A man accustomed as he was to literary accuracy must otherwise have said that he followed a copy. On the other hand the publisher of the book in 1758, says that he followed "the last manuscript copy, corrected and enlarged by the author's own hand."

If, then, we suppose the book to be a forgery, we must suppose also that so careful a collector as Dr. Birch accepted without question a forgery which he had every opportunity of detecting: we must suppose that the forger courted detection by allowing his work to get abroad while Swift was still alive: * and that he concocted a counterfeit work when the genuine MS. was certainly in existence and might at any time have appeared to confute him.

It would clearly require powerful arguments to meet these proofs that the work is Swift's own. But the evidence to the contrary really amounts to nothing at all. The first doubt was raised by Dr. Johnson, in his "Life of Swift" (written more than twenty years after Lucas's book was published). The History, he says, was "after Swift's death in the hands of Lord Orrery and Dr. King.† A book under that title was published with Swift's name by Dr. Lucas, of which I can only say, that it seemed by no means to correspond with the notions that I had formed of it, from a conversation which I once heard between the Earl of Orrery and old Mr. Lewis." The doubt, it is only fair to say, is hesitatingly expressed; and Johnson must have known how deceptive the memory as to such matters is, and how feeble a guide is the recollection of others' report of what they recollected. But even this hesitating doubt is completely dissipated as evidence when we find Johnson himself, twenty years before, fully accepting the book as genuine. In the *Idler* (No. 65, July 14, 1759) Johnson says, "with hopes like these, to the executors of Swift was committed the history of the last years of Queen Anne, and to those of Pope, the works which remained unprinted in his closet. The performances of Pope were burnt by those whom he had, perhaps, selected from all mankind as most likely to publish them: and the history had likewise perished, had not a straggling transcript fallen into busy hands."

* Doubtless his mind was gone: but the world could not know that recovery was impossible.

† This is inaccurate. It was in their hands for a certain time during Swift's life. What became of it after his death we have no means of knowing.

With Johnson any doubt that is worth listening to, begins and ends. It was revived again by Lord Stanhope,* who in the text of the History of the Reign of Queen Anne speaks of "great reason to doubt:" and in the index names the work as "falsely ascribed to Swift." He tells us also that Macaulay had "more than once expressed (to Lord Stanhope) the conviction that it was not his." This is doubtless confirmed by a note which Macaulay has placed opposite the title of the book in the copy of Lord Orrery's *Remarks*, annotated by him in pencil, which the British Museum possesses—"Wretched stuff; and, I firmly believe not Swift's." But Macaulay's casually expressed convictions are belied by the fact that he actually quotes a description given in the book, of Lord Somers's manner, as written by one of his enemies.† But a forger, who was at work half a century later, was neither a good authority on the peculiarities of Lord Somers, nor could he be called one of his "enemies."

So much for the growth of doubts which, once started, are apt to be pursued from mere love of paradox. They were revived in 1873, when Mr. Disraeli, in a speech at Glasgow, referred to the work as Swift's, and for so doing was accused by a correspondent in the *Times*, of surprising ignorance. The controversy which ensued threw no new light whatever on the subject.

APPENDIX IV.

THE MARRIAGE OF SWIFT AND STELLA

RATHER than encumber the narrative of Swift's life with a discussion so long as this must be, I have deemed it best to state separately the arguments in favour of his marriage. I must again acknowledge the invaluable aid which I have received from Mr. Elwin in weighing the evidence and in arranging the arguments. Much of what follows I might attribute entirely to him, were it not that by so doing I should impute to him, not only the merit of his own arguments, but the defects which may belong to my method of stating them.

* 4th Edition, II., 176.

† The words in the book are: "His breast has been seen to heave, and his eyes to sparkle with rage in those very moments when his words, and the cadence of his voice, were in the humblest and softest manner." Macaulay writes, as the description of his enemies, "Sometimes while his voice was soft, and his words kind and courteous, his delicate frame was almost convulsed by suppressed emotion." (History, IV., 448, Edit. 1855.)

For seventy years after the death of Swift, his marriage to Stella had come to be accepted, after the amount of doubt and discussion which was inseparable from a matter so mysterious, as a fact. But in 1820 Mr. Monck Mason published his "History and Antiquities of the Cathedral Church of St. Patrick." A large part of that volume is devoted to the life of Swift: and the principal, if not the only, novelty in that life is its maintenance of the proposition that the marriage, so long accepted, had no foundation at all in fact. Mason's book was published between the first and second editions of Scott's Swift: and in the latter edition (1824), while Scott notices the arguments which Mason had brought against him, he refuses to change his view in deference to them. Mason's view, however, was accepted by the late Mr. Dilke: and Mr. Forster, although he did not reach the point in Swift's life where a full discussion was possible, yet states ("Life of Swift," p. 140) that he "can find no evidence of a marriage that is at all reasonably sufficient." A recent writer in the *Quarterly Review* expresses, even more strongly, the same view.

Now, undoubtedly, it must be admitted that the course of Swift's biography would run more smoothly, and that expressions used in his letters would be more naturally and simply brought into accord with the facts, were it possible to set aside this marriage as a fabrication. Were it not so, the matter would need no argument at all. It must be admitted, further, that some of the evidence adduced is absolutely worthless, depending upon no more than the idle stories of those who sought to gain attention by inventing gossip. The truth must be reached by testing the more valid evidence adduced, and the arguments with which Monck Mason attempts to set this evidence aside.

To begin with the earliest in the order of time. Lord Orrery, in his *Remarks* on Swift, published in 1752, states (Letter II.), "Stella's real name was Johnson. She was the daughter of Sir William Temple's steward, and the concealed, but *undoubted*, wife of Dr. Swift. . . . . I cannot tell how long she remained in England, or whether she made more journeys than one to Ireland after Sir William Temple's death, but, *if my informations are right*, she was married to Dr. Swift in the year 1716, by Dr. Ashe, then Bishop of Clogher."

Next Dr. Delany, Swift's old and intimate friend, in his *Observations* on Lord Orrery's *Remarks*, published in 1754, writes (p. 52), "Your Lordship's account of his marriage is, *I am satisfied*, true." He then turns to an explanation of Swift's conduct in a matter the truth of which he thinks beyond doubt: and tells, on the authority of an intimate friend of his own, whose informant was Stella herself, the story of her refusal, as "too late," of Swift's offer to own the marriage about six years after the ceremony had taken place.

Before going into any further evidence, let us see how Mason deals with these two witnesses. "The first person," says Mason (p. 299), "that

mentions it is John, Earl of Orrery, who relates 'that they were married in the year 1716, by Dr. Ashe, then Bishop of Clogher.' This however he is far from asserting positively: rather doubtingly he adds, 'if my informations are right;' so that this testimony, when we consider the temper and disposition of the narrator, the faltering manner in which it is advanced, and the weak arguments with which it is supported, becomes at length very feeble evidence indeed. The earl's account is, however, supported by that of Dr. Delany, who in his 'Observations on Lord Orrery's *Remarks*,' declares his opinion of its truth. That Dr. Delany's acquaintance with this matter should go no further than opinion, furnishes argument against rather than for it, and yet the belief of this intimate friend of Swift is the best evidence we have in favour of the marriage, and that which most deserves our attention."

Mason adds the following note: "Dr. Delany does not, in his own work, give us any additional proof of the marriage ceremony having been performed, neither does he say that he received any direct communication upon the subject; this would have been more to the purpose than all his reasoning, nor can we suppose, had he any such direct proof, that he would have recourse to such weak arguments as he employs."

From these comments we can gather some idea of the dishonesty with which Mason conducts the controversy, and the flagrant misrepresentation of evidence by which he imposes upon any one credulous enough to trust him. He quotes only the words in which Lord Orrery gives the detailed circumstances of the ceremony, the date and the person by whom it was performed He suppresses altogether the previous assertion of Orrery that Stella was "the concealed, but *undoubted* wife" of Swift. This assertion is positive enough: it contains no doubt or faltering, and Orrery applies a qualifying phrase only to the further information about the details. But by quoting only this last, Mason is able to misrepresent the statement and dishonestly to attach the qualification to the main and central fact. As to the "weak arguments by which Lord Orrery supports it," these are only invented by Mason to serve his purpose. Orrery adduces no arguments, either weak or strong. He simply states that the fact was undoubted: and the value we place upon his assertion depends upon our estimate of his competence to form an opinion, and of his honesty in stating the degree of certainty which attached to the evidence upon which he depended.

Next as to Mason's description of Delany's evidence, which is just as dishonest. "The Earl's account," he says, "is supported by that of Delany, who declares his opinion of its truth." "Your *account* of the marriage is, *I am satisfied*, true," are Delany's actual words. The "account" referred clearly to the circumstances of the marriage: the fact was accepted as an undoubted truth. Delany does not express "an opinion" of its truth: he writes from first to last as if it were certain: and even as to the details, it is not an "opinion" of the truth of Lord

Orrery's statement which he avows, but that "*he is satisfied*" of its truth.

Having thus twisted the statements, Mason affirms that Delany's acquaintance with this matter goes no further than opinion; that "he does not in his own work give us any additional proof of the marriage ceremony having been performed;" that "he does not say that he received any direct communication upon the subject:" and that we cannot suppose "had he any such direct proof, that he would have recourse to such weak arguments as he employs." But Delany does tell us of the testimony of his own "well-known" friend, to whom Stella imparted her story, although Mason makes no reference to the fact. Just as in the case of Lord Orrery, Mason imputes to Delany arguments, to which Delany never has recourse. Delany accepts the evidence as sufficient, and then proceeds to suggest explanations of the conduct of Swift: but he does not even suggest that these explanations should be accepted as additional proofs: the evidence was too strong, to his mind, to require them.

To misrepresent statements is the surest proof of being unable to meet them. By deliberately suppressing and twisting what Lord Orrery and Delany said, Mason virtually threw up his case.

But to proceed to additional evidence. The next is that of George Monck Berkeley, in the Inquiry into the Life of Dean Swift, prefixed to his "Literary Relics," published in 1789. "In 1716," he says (p. xxxvi.), Swift and Stella "were married by the Bishop of Clogher, who himself related the circumstance to Bishop Berkeley, by whose relict the story was communicated to *me*." Of this Monck Mason says: "What has been adduced by Mr. Monck Berkeley, in his "Literary Relics," is certainly without foundation, viz.: "that the Bishop of Clogher himself related the circumstance to Bishop Berkeley, by whose relict, he says, it was communicated to him." The Bishop of Clogher never could have had any communication with Berkeley upon the subject, for the former died in the year (1717) following that in which the marriage is reported to have been celebrated, and the latter was at that time in Italy, where he had resided during several preceding years."

Now Berkeley *was*, no doubt, abroad at the time. But Mason does not state that he was abroad in the capacity of tutor to the Bishop of Clogher's son, and that communications not only may, but must have passed between the bishop and his son's tutor. The circumstance need not have been related by word of mouth, as Mason assumes. The essential fact, which was all that Monck Berkeley cared for, was that the communication took place: how it took place, is a matter of no moment. Berkeley was the respected friend both of the bishop and of Swift. To him, perhaps, sooner than to any other man, would the secret have been entrusted. So much for the intrinsic probability of the story. And who are the witnesses on whose authority we are to accept it? Not the

faintest suspicion could attach either to the Bishop of Clogher or to Berkeley. Could Berkeley's wife be mistaken? The fact was a very simple one: that the Bishop of Clogher married Swift to Stella. How could she have misconceived, or misreported it, unless of set purpose? And is it likely that she would put into her husband's mouth, after his death, a deliberate falsehood which she had invented herself, and in which she could have no sort of interest? The same reasoning applies to the credibility of Monck Berkeley, who was a man of high integrity and whose narrative is marked by a full sense of responsibility.

Next there is the evidence of Thomas Sheridan in his "Life of Swift," published in 1784, in which he speaks (p. 311 of 2nd edition) of the story of Swift's refusal to acknowledge the marriage, even at Stella's dying request. From an examination of the evidence dealt with in the next appendix I am compelled to reject the authenticity of this anecdote. But although Sheridan might have been mistaken as to the particular course which the interview took, from an imperfect recollection of his father's narrative, yet I do not think it is possible that he could have been mistaken as to the main fact, attested by his father's testimony, that the marriage had actually taken place. And his evidence becomes all the more difficult to set aside, from the fact that the elder Sheridan's authority is adduced by others as supporting their version of the story—a version which, while it differs from that of the younger Sheridan, is still based upon the same primary fact, that the marriage actually took place.

Another proof of the marriage, which might not in itself be strong, but which, as corroborative of the others, acquires much weight, is the assertion of Dr. Madden as quoted by Johnson in his "Life of Swift," ("Lives of the Poets," Cunningham's edition, 3, 186). Johnson says that doubts have lately been thrown upon the marriage: "but alas!" he goes on, "poor Stella, as Dr. Madden told me, related her melancholy story to Dr. Sheridan when he attended her as a clergyman to prepare her for death." Johnson's information must have been received from Dr. Madden, most probably about 1745, when he was correcting and cutting down Madden's poem, called "Boulter's Monument," for which service Madden paid him ten pounds. The evidence was thus entirely independent of the testimony which the younger Sheridan gives at a later day of his father's knowledge of the story. We can scarcely believe that a man so masculine in intellect, and so conscientious in his adherence to strict accuracy as Johnson, would have quoted Madden's testimony as conclusive evidence, had he not known that Madden had drawn his information from Sheridan himself. From Sheridan also, in all probability, was derived that further evidence which Johnson quotes on Madden's authority: "Soon after, in his forty-ninth year, he was privately married to Mrs. Johnson, by Dr. Ashe, Bishop of Clogher, as Dr. Madden told me, in the garden," ("Lives of the Poets," 3, 177.). Monck Mason discredits the idea that Sheridan could have been Madden's informant,

because they were different in politics. When, however, we remember that they were both clergymen, both frequenting Dublin society, both much connected with Trinity College, both men of kindly and sociable habits, the balance of probability is very decidedly the other way.

Such are the arguments in favour of the marriage. The witnesses all agree with one another, (though the sources of their information are clearly independent) both in regard to the date, and in the other details of the ceremony. Though the report was published almost immediately after Swift's death, and had long been accepted by his most intimate friends, it never was contradicted either by Swift or Stella, or by anyone whose authority would even be worth attention, except Dr. Lyon. As Dr. Lyon was only Swift's attendant in his later and feeble years, it may be questioned whether his evidence on the point would be of much value. But it is so vague in its character as to be even on this ground alone valueless. The story, Dr. Lyon says in his MS. notes in a copy of Hawkesworth's Life, now in the Forster Library at South Kensington, was "founded only on hearsay": and he adds a second-hand testimony to its falsity that proves how little he could trust to his own knowledge. "It is certain," he goes on, "that the Dean told one of his friends whom he advised to marry, 'that he never wished to marry at the time that he ought to have entered into that state: for he counted it as the happiest condition, especially towards the decline of life, when a faithful and tender friend is most wanted.' While he was talking to this effect his friend expressed his wishes to have seen him married. The Dean asked 'Why?' 'Because,' replied the other, "I should have had the pleasure of seeing your offspring. All the world would have been pleased to have seen the issue of such a genius.' The Dean smiled, and denied his being married in the same manner as before: and said 'he never saw the woman he wished to be married to.' The same gentleman, who was intimate with Mrs. Dingley for ten years before she died, in 1743, took occasion to tell her, that such a story was whispered of her friend Mrs. Johnson's marriage with the Dean; but she only laughed at it, as an idle tale founded on suspicion."

It is scarcely necessary to point out how small is the weight to be attached to this. Clearly Swift, even if the conversation occurred as stated, was speaking only in generalities. To any one on the distant terms in which the interlocutor clearly stood, it was certain that Swift would enter upon none of the secrets of his life. As to Mrs. Dingley, it is not likely that she would be entrusted with the secret at all. Her character and temper were troublesome, and her position was much more that of the companion, necessary for appearance, than that of the confidante. But if she had the secret in her keeping, she could choose no other way of turning aside an impertinent question than that which is reported. The whole paragraph could have been written only by one whose knowledge of Swift was based upon second-hand reports of his mere casual acquaintances. The utter

baselessness of Lyon's testimony becomes even more evident when he adduces the disbelief of Swift's housekeeper, Mrs. Ridgway—an uneducated drudge—as an argument against the reality of an occurrence which, admittedly, was entrusted only to one or two of Swift's oldest and closest friends.

As flimsy is the argument against the marriage, which Lyon and Monck Mason adduce, viz., that Stella used her maiden name in her ordinary signatures and finally in her will. This was clearly only a part of the bargain : and after it had been finally settled between them, that no publication of the marriage should take place beyond a very limited circle of friends, it remained for Stella, both out of fidelity to their original bargain, and out of a regard for her own dignity, to use that name, and to exercise those free testamentary powers with which she was quite confident that Swift would never, on the strength of his legal rights, seek to interfere.

It is perhaps worth adding, as some confirmation of the stronger evidence given above, the testimony of Deane Swift. He had considerable opportunities for reaching the truth, although not always the best judgment for testing it ; and while he acknowledged, in one of the letters written to Lord Orrery during the lifetime of Swift, and transcribed in a volume now in Lord Cork's possession, that to many the marriage seemed based only "on a buzz and rumours," yet in his own volume on the Dean, published in 1755, he unhesitatingly expresses his conviction of its truth.

In connection with a point which affects so nearly the relations between Swift and Stella, it may be well to say a word of what is the chief literary record of their love. This is the *Journal to Stella*, so-called, although the letters which make it up were addressed jointly to Esther Johnson and to Rebecca Dingley, and although the former did not yet bear to Swift the name of Stella. Of these letters the last twenty-five were published by Hawkesworth, and placed for reference in the British Museum : the earlier letters were published subsequently and less faithfully by Deane Swift, and of them only one remains to aid in verification. One of the chief features of these letters is the so-called "little language' which occurs in them : a language partly made up of the kindly and easy tricks of phrase in which Swift gave his confidences to Stella ; partly of the childish and broken verbiage which recalled the prattle of her infancy, and in writing which Swift says "he makes up his mouth as if he was speaking it ;" and partly of certain tokens which they used in a cypher of their own, and which we can occasionally interpret with fair certainty. M.D. seems to stand for Esther Johnson and her friend : PDFR. for Swift : Ppt. for Stella alone, and so on. Mr. Forster has spent some care

not only in the useful labour of collating the letters which still exist, but in hazarding translations for such cyphers as these. Not a few may deem that such secrets lose in charm more than they yield of biographical interest, by a too painful nicety of interpretation.

APPENDIX V.

SWIFT'S OFFER TO ANNOUNCE THE MARRIAGE.

THE evidence which bears on the question of when, and by whom, any proposal to own the marriage, was made, is involved and inconsistent, and in one version tells more severely against Swift than any other incident of his life. On what basis rests a charge of callousness which, if true, would almost amount to barbarity?

Three stories have hitherto been given.

Writing in 1754, Dr. Delany says :—

"This (the Dean's increasing gloom of temper) gave Stella inexpressible uneasiness; and I well knew a friend to whom she opened herself upon that head, declaring that the Dean's temper was so altered, and his attention to money so increased (probably increased by his solicitude to save for her sake); her own health at the same time gradually impaired: that she could not take upon herself the care of his house and economy: and therefore refused to be publicly owned for his wife, as he earnestly desired she should. It was then, she said, 'too late: and therefore better that they should live on, as they had hitherto done.'"

This refers to the year 1722 or thereabouts: since the paragraph which follows speaks of her resolution as confirmed, *not very long after*, by the publication of "Cadenus and Vanessa," just after the death of Vanessa in 1723.

Next Sheridan, the son of Swift's intimate friend, writing in 1784, says :—

"A short time before her death a scene passed between the Dean and her, an account of which I had from my father, and which I shall relate with reluctance, as it seems to bear more hard on Swift's humanity than any other part of his conduct in life. As she found her final dissolution approach, a few days before it happened, in the presence of Dr. Sheridan, she addressed Swift in the most earnest and pathetic terms to grant her dying request. That as the ceremony of marriage had passed between them, though for sundry considerations they had not cohabited in that state, in order to put it out of the power of slander to be busy with her fame after

death, she adjured him by their friendship to let her have the satisfaction of dying at least, though she had not lived, his acknowledged wife. Swift made no reply, but turning on his heel, walked silently out of the room, nor ever saw her afterwards during the few days she lived. This behaviour threw Mrs. Johnson into unspeakable agonies, and for a time she sank under the weight of so cruel a disappointment. But soon after, roused by indignation, she inveighed against his cruelty in the bitterest terms; and, sending for a lawyer, made her will, bequeathing her fortune, by her own name, to charitable uses."

Lastly, on the authority of Theophilus Swift, the son of Deane Swift, Sir Walter Scott gives the following story, in which the words reported by Delany are transferred to the dying scene, but with a widely different purport from that of the story told by Sheridan. Theophilus Swift claimed to have his information from Mrs. Whiteway.

"When Stella was in her last weak state, and one day had come in a chair to the Deanery, she was with difficulty brought into the parlour. The Dean had prepared some mulled wine, and kept it by the fire for her refreshment. After tasting it she became very faint, but, having recovered a little by degrees, when her breath (for she was asthmatic) was allowed her, she desired to lie down. She was carried upstairs and laid on a bed; the Dean sitting by her, held her hand, and addressed her in the most affectionate manner. She drooped, however, very much. Mrs. Whiteway was the only third person present. After a short time, her politeness induced her to withdraw to the adjoining room, but it was necessary, on account of air, that the door should not be closed: it was half shut—the rooms were close adjoining. Mrs. Whiteway had too much honour to listen, but could not avoid observing that the Dean and Mrs. Johnson conversed together in a low tone: the latter, indeed, was too weak to raise her voice. Mrs. Whiteway paid no attention, having no idle curiosity, but at length she heard the Dean say, in an audible voice, "Well, my dear, if you wish it, it shall be owned;" to which Stella answered, with a sigh, "It is too late."

With regard to these stories, this much may be said with confidence, that Delany is almost certain to be right, so far as his narrative goes: that Sheridan was at least honest, though the information he got from his father (who died in 1738) was too remote from the date when he wrote his book to let us accept, without hesitation, all he says: while Theophilus Swift, the hair-brained son of a very foolish father, was almost certain to be wrong even when professing to report the words of so trustworthy an authority as Mrs. Whiteway. His story is clearly a mere garbled version of that told by Delany, except that Delany's belongs to 1722, when it was probable, and Theophilus Swift's to 1727, when it was scarcely possible. Delany's story we may therefore accept as true: Theophilus Swift's we may pronounce false.

With regard to Sheridan's story, we must first look at its intrinsic

probability. Swift, it may be allowed, had motives for refusing the acknowledgment in 1727, even though willing to propose it, according to Delany, in 1722. Since 1722 the story of his connection with Vanessa had come out by the publication of the poem "Cadenus and Vanessa." Had he acknowledged Stella as his wife in 1727, the precautions he had taken in their intercourse must have made him ridiculous; we know, also, that in 1726 and 1727 he was exceedingly careful that no rumours should get abroad by Stella's dying at the Deanery. At that time he evidently avoided anything that could give the least confirmation to the report of their marriage.

But when this is allowed, the story still remains improbable. Honest as he is, Sheridan is frequently absurdly circumstantial in his imputing of motives and describing of conversations. His story might, no doubt, be reconciled with that of Delany, by supposing that the Dean had changed his mind in the interval between 1722 and 1727. But had the incident happened as described at the later date, Swift would have felt a resentment against Stella, which might no doubt have passed away with time, but which would probably have prevented his writing as he did of her, in terms of the most earnest affection, immediately after her death. Lastly, if Stella was so roused by indignation, why should she have acted, with regard to her will, just as Swift had, more than a year before, suggested she should do?* Would it not have been a more complete revenge to have published to the world the evidence of her marriage which she doubtless possessed, rather than have acquiesced in the refusal by using her maiden name, in a legal document?

But here a new fragment of evidence helps us. Amongst the MSS. belonging to Lord Cork, I find a transcript of a letter from Deane Swift to Lord Orrery—one of a series written in the last years of the Dean's life, in which the following occurs:—

"I must correct myself again. What I writ of Stella from the best of my memory was not right exactly. Mrs. Whiteway says, he did not acknowledge her to be his wife in the presence of Dr. Sheridan, but that Stella told Dr. Sheridan he had offered to declare his marriage to the world, which she refused, alleging that it was then too late."

Here, then, is a fourth version of what probability would lead us to think was one and the same story at bottom. Deane Swift would not himself be entitled to a great deal of weight: but here he is almost certain to be right. Mrs. Whiteway was strictly honest and had the best means of information. She was intimate with Sheridan. Deane Swift, as her son-in-law, was in constant communication with her: and both were trying to amass all the facts they could for Lord Orrery's book, which was already in preparation. The story was told even before the Dean's death. It is not a mere careless version, but is evidently carefully corrected after consul-

* Letter to Mr. Worrall, July 15, 1726.

tation with Mrs. Whiteway. The corrected version would seem to make the story less important, since it made Sheridan's evidence less direct ; * and Deane Swift would not readily or lightly have stript his story of any importance that it seemed to possess.

Now we have to see how it suits with the other versions. It is quite enough to account for, and dispose of, the flimsy superstructure that Theophilus Swift built on it, and that Sir Walter Scott accepted. But as the story brings in the elder Sheridan, it is absolutely inconsistent with the story told by Sheridan's son, attributing to his father an opposite version. We must believe one to be mistaken : and of the two, surely the younger Sheridan was most liable to mistake. He—when a boy of seventeen, too young to understand the real bearing of the question—had discussed the matter with his father at least forty-six years before he wrote. The discussion would necessarily involve the fact of Swift's original condition of secrecy. Is it impossible that this condition, imposed by Swift, may have led Sheridan to think that the refusal to remove it was Swift's also ?

The story, finally, agrees perfectly with that of Delany, and it would fix the friend of whom Delany speaks as the elder Sheridan himself. The relations between Delany and Sheridan were not very cordial : and this fact may have prompted Delany's omission of the name. An apparent difficulty in the way of this theory arises from the fact that Delany's story refers to 1722, while both the younger Sheridan and Dr. Madden, as reported by Johnson, represent Sheridan's information as given him by Stella only on her death-bed. But the difficulty is only apparent ; although Delany's friend spoke of 1722, it does not follow that it was not on Stella's death-bed that he received the account of an occurrence which took place five years before.

APPENDIX VI.

WOOD'S HALFPENCE

To attempt a complete explanation of this transaction is a hopeless task ; but there are certain misrepresentations of it which it is well to clear away. Scott, whose notes to the *Drapier's Letters* repeat the impressions of earlier editors who were more conversant with the facts, treats the

* The statement which Deane Swift corrects occurs previously in the same letter. "It is said, he acknowledged her to be his wife in the presence of Dr. Sheridan, some little time before she died."

whole affair, in his *Life*, as a sort of portentous joke on the part of Swift. But it is Lord Stanhope whose version of the affair is most unfair.

He begins by describing the financial part of the patent as "directed by Walpole with his usual skill." Unless the word is used in a sarcastic sense, it is hard to say wherein this skill was shewn. Lord Stanhope forgets to state that the proposed amount of copper coinage was from six to ten times more than independent and competent writers declared to be necessary. In what he calls "this clear and well-conducted transaction," Lord Stanhope finds only one, and that a trifling, flaw, which "could not materially affect the quantity or quality of the coin to be issued." This was the payment to the Duchess of Kendal of £10,000—or about 10 per cent. of the whole coinage—as a preliminary bribe. Lord Stanhope omits to state the further deductions, in payments to the Crown and the Comptroller, amounting to £1000 a year.*

That Irish susceptibilities should have been aroused by the insulting manner of carrying out the transaction, seems to Lord Stanhope only a proof of the nation's folly. When the vote of the Parliament declares that the terms of the Patent had not been carried out, and that, even if they had been, the nation would have lost 150 per cent., Lord Stanhope meets the statement by quoting the impartial authority of Walpole. But Walpole's words, so far as they are intelligible at all, do not touch the fact that copper worth 12d. was to count for two shillings and sixpence in Ireland. His talk of the cost of coinage in the English mint, of the exchange, of "allowances," and so on, is all beside the question. England no doubt paid something for her copper coinage: Ireland was to pay a great deal more.

The Report of the Committee of Privy Council, which Lord Stanhope thinks clear and conclusive, has already been shewn to be, in material points, fallacious. He praises Wood's conduct in consenting that 5½d. should be the limit which any one could be compelled, in one payment, to receive: forgetting that in the multitude of petty payments in Ireland, this sufficiently ensured the speedy currency of the coin.

By arguments so weak as these Lord Stanhope maintains that Swift, for the purposes of a simulated indignation, traded on a popular delusion, and he further believes that Swift attacked this "clear and well-conducted transaction" with no ulterior purpose: that he had no tyranny and no misgovernment to expose, but only a childish love of mischief to indulge: and that, when the outcry against the halfpence was over, "the whole edifice of indignant patriotism crumbled to the ground!"

* This is the statement of the Government Report. The payment was apparently, as a fact, only £300. But the misstatement represents either further error or more intricate dishonesty.

APPENDIX VII.

PROCLAMATION AGAINST THE DRAPIER

Oct. 27th, 1724.

A PROCLAMATION for discovering ye Author of ye Pamphlet intitled A Letter to ye whole people of Ireland, by M. B. Drapier, author of the Letter to the shopkeepers &c.

£300 Reward.

BY THE LORD LIEUTENANT AND COUNCIL OF IRELAND.

A Proclamation.

CONTENT:

Whereas a wicked and malicious pamphlet, intituled A letter to the whole people of Ireland, by M. B. Drapier, author of the Letter to the shopkeepers &c., printed by John Harding, in Molesworth's Court, in Fishamble Street, Dublin, in which are contained several seditious and scandalous paragraphs highly reflecting upon his Majesty and his ministers, tending to alienate the affections of his good subjects of England and Ireland from each other, and to promote sedition among the people, hath been lately printed and published in this kingdom: We, the Lord Lieutenant and Council do hereby publish and declare that, in order to discover the author of the said seditious pamphlet, we will give the necessary orders for the payment of three hundred pounds sterling, to such person or persons as shall within the specified six months from this date hereof, discover the author of the said pamphlet, so as he be apprehended and convicted thereby.

Given at the council chamber in Dublin, this twenty-seventh day of October, one thousand seven hundred and twenty-four.

(Signed) Midleton *Cancer.* Shannon; Donneraill; G. Fforbes; H. Meath; Santry; Tyrawly; Fferrars; William Conolly; Ralph Gore; William Whitshed; B. Hale; Gust. Hume; Ben Parry; James Tynte; R. Tighe; T. Clutterbuck.

God save the King.

APPENDIX VIII.

EDITIONS OF GULLIVER

THE bibliography of Gulliver's Travels belongs to the commentary on Swift's works, rather than to the account of his life. But there are one or two points regarding it, to which it may be well to refer.

The book was first published about the 7th of November, 1726. When the first edition was issued Swift got a large paper copy, in which he entered from time to time his MS. corrections. That large paper copy is now in South Kensington Museum, and it is of great importance in helping us to trace the comparative authority of each edition and the reasons for the later changes.

Before the close of 1726 there was a re-issue of the first volume, along with a new edition of the second volume, the latter only being designated as a second edition. The first volume seems to have been re-issued as it stood, in consequence of the wish to consult Swift as to the so-called commendatory verses, which it was proposed to print before it in any new edition.* The second volume professes to be a second edition: but it contains none of the MS. changes of the large-paper copy. In 1727 there appeared the first new edition of both volumes: the first volume being designated "Second edition," and the second volume "Second edition, *corrected.*" In spite of the different designation, an examination of all accessible copies makes it certain that they belong to the same issue.

Now both volumes of this new edition embody, not all, but a certain number, of Swift's own MS. corrections. The changes are not very important, but they are not merely typographical, and the printer must necessarily have had access to Swift's MS. corrections so far as these had been made at that date.

But the edition which embodies the greatest number of these MS. corrections is Faulkner's Dublin edition of 1735.† It was in that edition, too, as has not been noticed by the editors, that the *Letter from Gulliver to his cousin Sympson* was for the first time printed. The letter is dated April 27, 1727: but its date is only a part of the mystification which Swift intended that the letter should produce.

This conclusively settles the question of Swift's watchful interest over the new editions. However much he allowed others to act for him, to regulate the issue, and probably to draw the profits, he yet took care that such changes as he wished to make in the text should not be overlooked. It proves, further, the supervision which he gave to Faulkner's edition of his works.

The changes were chiefly in *Laputa*, on which criticism had been least favourable; and Swift seems even to have added further changes after those embodied in the edition of 1735. At p. 70 of *Laputa*, in the large-paper copy, he has inserted an addition of some length, which has never yet been printed.

The reasons for the letter to Sympson are plain enough. Swift desired

* *Pope to Swift*, 8 March, $17\frac{27}{28}$.

† The following passages may be noted where this edition embodies changes which are not made in "the 2nd edition corrected" (1727) of the 2nd volume:—Laputa, pp. 42, 90, 101; Houyhnmhnms, pp. 65, 69, 77, 97.

to sit loosely to the responsibility of authorship. He suggests in 1726 that probably parts are garbled: and throughout he uses this loophole for disclaiming what he or his friends might afterwards condemn. If he wished in 1735 to embody changes and yet to make them appear to be what he originally wrote, he could have chosen no better means to help the design than such a letter. In it he referred at once to material and to trifling changes. He speaks of them with the seriousness of a narrator who finds his veracious history confused and disturbed by the mistakes of the editor. To carry out the delusion, he dates the letter eight years before it was written.* Further, the letter helped to give circumstantiality to the whole book. Who would not be persuaded by a traveller, that showed himself anxious that there should be no mis-spelling of such veracious nomenclature as that of Brobdingrag, which has hitherto been wrongly printed Brobdingnag?†

A further proof of Swift's interest in *Gulliver* is supplied by an unpublished letter of his own to Benjamin Motte, of Dec. 28, 1727, (now in South Kensington Museum) in which he gives minute suggestions as to the engravings which may be selected for pictures in a new edition. The little men, he thinks, will bear illustration better than the great. In one sentence of some interest, he gives his opinion of the hold the book has gained and is likely to retain. "The world," he says, "glutted itself with that book at first, but now it will go off but soberly, but I suppose will not be soon worn out."

APPENDIX IX.

THE JOURNAL OF 1727

This Journal having come into the hands of the late Mr. Forster, was by him bequeathed to South Kensington Museum, where it now is. On the inside of the cover of the little book in which it is written, there is the following note:—

"This Book I stole from the Right Honble. George Dodington, Esq.,

* One small fact shows the date to be a false one. Gulliver speaks of the book as having appeared seven months before. But it had appeared only five months before April, 1727. Such a slip was very likely n 1735; it would have been impossible in 1727.

† The question has been raised whether Swift really intended that the name should be Brobdingnag or (as Gulliver insists in his letter) Brobdingrag. The point is not of much import-

one of the Lords of the Treasury, June, 1727. But the Scribblings are all my own."

Then follow some memoranda relating to commissions which Swift had to perform—the providing of a clock for the cathedral, the purchase of spectacles, investments, the care of his grandfather's tomb, &c.

Next come the following fragments of verse.

HOLYHEAD, *Sepbr.* 25, 1727.

"Lo here I sit at holy head,
With muddy ale and mouldy bread:
I'm fastened (?) both by wind and tide,
I see the ships at anchor ride.
All Christain vittals stink of fish,
I'm where my enemyes would wish.
Convict of lies is every Sign,
The Inn has not one drop of wine.
The Captain swears the sea's too rough,
He has not passengers enough.
And thus the Dean is forc'd to stay
Till others come to help the pay.
In Dublin they'd be glad to see
A packet though it brings in me.
They cannot say the winds are cross:
Your Politicians at a loss
For want of matter swears and fretts—
Are forced to read the old Gazettes.
I never was in haste before,
To reach that slavish hateful shore.
Before, I always found the wind
To me was most malicious kind,
But now the danger of a friend,
On whom my fears and hopes depend,
Absent from whom all Climes are curst,
With whom I'm happy in the worst,
With rage impatient makes me wait
A passage to the Land I hate.

ance, but we certainly need not make the change on the authority of Gulliver, whose letter is quite sufficiently accounted for as a device for giving additional circumstantiality to the narrative. Swift had, at least, allowed one edition after another to appear, for eight years, without suggesting an alteration. He has not introduced it into the copy which contains his own MS. alterations. He makes it only in a mock letter addressed by himself in one character to himself in another. And, finally, the letter tells us that he "cannot stand to the corrections," but must leave the matter to his candid readers, "to adjust it as they please."

Else, rather on this bleaky shore,
Where loudest winds incessant roar,
Where neither herb nor tree will thrive,
Where Nature hardly seems alive,
I'd go in freedom to my grave
Than Rule yon Isle, and be a slave.

Ireland.

Remove me from this land of slaves,
Where all are fools, and all are knaves;
Where every knave and fool is bought,
Yet kindly sells himself for nought;
Where Whig and Tory fiercely fight
Who's in the wrong, who in the right;
And, when their country lies at stake,
They only fight for fighting sake,
While English sharpers take the pay,
And then stand by to see fair play.
Meantime the Whig is always winner,
And for his courage gets—a dinner.
His Excellency, too, perhaps
Spits in his mouth and stroaks his Chaps.
The humble whelp gives ev'ry vote—
To put the question strains his throat.
His Excellency's condescension
Will serve instead of place or pension.
When to the window he's trepan'd—
When my L^{d} shakes him by the hand,
Or, in the presence of beholders,
His arms upon the booby's shoulders—
You quickly see the gudgeon bite.
He tells his brother fools at night
How well the Governor's inclined—
So just, so gentle, and so kind.
He heard I kept a pack of hounds,
And longs to hunt upon my grounds,
He s^{d} our Ladyes were so fair,
The land had nothing to compare;
But that indeed which pleased me most,
He call'd my Dol a perfect toast.
He whispered public things at last,
Asked me how our elections past.
Some augmentation, Sir, you know,
Would make at least a handsome show.

Now kings a compliment expect ;
I shall not offer to direct.
There are some prating folks in town,
But, Sir, we must support the Crown.
Our letters say a Jesuit boasts
Of some invasion on your coasts.
The king is ready, when you will,
To pass another Popery bill ;
And for dissenters, he intends
To use them as his truest friends.

* * * * *

I think they justly ought to share
In all employments we can spare.
Next, for encouragement of spinning,
A duty might be laid on linen.
An act for laying down the plough—
England will send you corn enough ;
Another act that absentees
For licences shall pay no fees.
If England's friendship you would keep,
Feed nothing on your lands but sheep ;
But make an act, severe and full,
To bring up all who smuggle wool.
And then he kindly gave me hints
That all our wives should go in chintz.
To-morrow I shall tell you more,
For I'm to dine with him at four.
This was the speech, and here's the jest—
His arguments convinced the rest.
Away he runs, with zealous hotness,
Exceeding all the fools of Totness,
To move that all the nation round
Should pay a guinea in the pound ;
Yet should this blockhead beg a place,
Either from Excellent or Grace,
'Tis pre-engaged, and in his room
Townshend's cast page or Walpole's groom.

On L^d^ Carteret's arms given, as the custom is, at every Inn where the L^d^ L^t^ dines or lies, with all the bills in a long parchment.

'Tis twenty to one,
When Carteret is gone,

These praises we blot out ;
The truth will be got out,
And then we'll be smart on
His l^dship as Wharton ;
Or Shrewsbury's duke,
With many rebuke ;
Or Bolton the wise,
With his Spanish flyes ;
Or Grafton the deep,
Either drunk or asleep.
These titles and arms
Will then lose their charms,
If somebody's grace
Should come in his place.
And thus it goes round—
We praise and confound.
They can do no good,
Nor would if they could.
To injure the nation
Is recommendation ;
And why should they save her
By losing their favour ?
Poor kingdom, thou woulds't be that governor's debtor,
Who kindly would leave thee no worse nor no better.

Then comes the Testament to Posterity, quoted on p. 339, and finally the Journal, as follows :—

Friday, at 11 in the morning I left Chester. It was Sept^r. 22, 1727.

I bated at a blind ale-house 7 miles from Chester. I thence rode to Ridland,* in all, 22 miles. I lay there, had bad meat, and tolerable wine. I left Ridland at a quarter after 4 morn. on Saturday, slept on Penmenmawr, examined about my sign verses : the Inn is to be on t'other side, therefore the verses to be changed. I baited at Conway, the Guide going to another Inn. The Maid of the old Inn saw me in the Street, and said that was my Horse, she knew me ; there I dined and send for Ned Holland, a Squire famous for being mentioned in Mr. Lyndsay's verses to Davy Morice. I there again saw Hook's Tomb, who was the 41st Child of his Mother, and had himself 27 Children ; he died about 1639. There is a *nota bene* that one of his posterity new furbished up the Inscription. I had read in A. B^p William's Life that he was

* *I.e.* Rhudlan.

buryed in an obscure Church in North Wales. I enquired, and heard it was at ——— * Church, within a mile of Bangor, whither I was going: I went to the Church, the Guide grumbling. I saw the Tomb with his Statue kneeling (in marble). It began thus:—[Hospes lege et relege quod in hoc obscuro sacello non expectares. Hic jacet omnium prœsulum celeberrimus]. I came to Bangor, and crossed the Ferry a mile from it, where there is an Inn, which, if it be well kept, will break Bangor. There I lay—it was 22 miles from Holyhead. I was on horseback at 4 in the morning, resolving to be at Church at Holyhead, but to shew Wat Owen Tudor's Tomb at Penmarry. We passed the place (being a little out of the way) by the Guide's knavery, who had no mind to stay. I was now so weary with riding, that I was forced to stop at Langueveny, 7 miles from the Ferry, and rest 2 hours. Then I went on very weary, but in a few miles more Watt's Horse lost his two fore-shoes, so the Horse was forced to limp after us. The Guide was less concerned than I. In a few miles more, my Horse lost a fore-shoe, and could not go on the rocky ways. I walked above 2 miles to spare him. It was Sunday, and no Smith to be got. At last there was a Smith in the way; we left the Guide to shoe the Horses, and walked to a hedge Inn 3 miles from Holyhead. There I stay[d] an hour, with no ale to be drunk, a Boat offered, and I went by Sea and sail in it to Holyhead. The Guide came about the same time. I dined with an old Inn-keeper, Mrs. Welch, about 3, on a loyn of mutton, very good, but the worst ale in the world, and no wine, for the day before I came here, a vast number went to Ireld after having drunk out all the wine. There was stale beer, and I tryed a receit of Oyster shells, which I got powdered on purpose; but it was good for nothing. I walked on the rocks in the evening, and then went to bed, and dreamt that I had got 20 falls from my Horse.

Monday, Sept[r]. 25. The Captain talks of sailing at 12. The talk goes off; the Wind is fair, but he says it is too fierce; I believe he wants more company. I had a raw chicken for dinner, and Brandy with water for my drink. I walkt morning and afternoon among the rocks. This evening Watt tells me that my Landlady whispered him that the Grafton packet boat, just come in, had brought her 18 bottles of Irish Claret. I secured one, and supped on part of a neat's tongue, which a friend at London had given Watt to put up for me—and drank a pint of the wine, which was bad enough. Not a soul is yet come to Holyhead, except a young fellow who smiles when he meets me, and would fain be my companion; but it is not come to that yet. I writ abundance of verses this day; and several useful hints (tho' I say it). I went to bed at 10, and dreamt abundance of nonsense.

Tues. 26th. I am forced to wear a shirt three days, * * * * * * * * I was sparing of them all the way. It was a mercy there

* Blank left in MS.

were six clean when I left London; otherwise Watt (whose blunders would bear an history) would have put them all in the great Box of goods which goes by the Carrier to Chester. He brought but one cravat, and the reason he gave was because the rest were foul, and he thought he should not put foul linnen into the Portmanteau. For he never dreamt it might be washed on the way. My shirts are all foul now, and by his reasoning, I fear he will leave them at Holyhead when we go. I got anoth^{r} loin of mutton, but so tough I could not chew it, and drank my 2^{d} pint of wine. I walked this morning a good way among the rocks, and to a hole in one of them from whence at certain periods the water spurted up several foot high. It rain'd all night, and hath rained since dinner. But now the sun shines, and I will take my afternoon's walk. It was fairer and milder weather than yesterday, yet the Captain never dreams of sailing. To say the Truth Michaelmas is the worst season in the year. Is this strange stuff? Why, what *would* you have me do? I have writt verses, and put down hints till I am weary. I see no creature, I cannot read by candle-light. Sleeping makes me sick. I reckon my self fixed here: and have a mind like Marechall Tallard to take a house and garden. I wish you a merry Christmas, and expect to see you by Candlemas. I have walked this evening again about 3 miles on the rocks; my giddiness, God be thanked, is almost gone, and my hearing continues; I am now retired to my Chamber to scribble or sit hum-drum. The night is fair, and they pretend to have some hopes of going to-morrow.

Sept^{r}. 26th. Thoughts upon being confined at Holyhead. If this were to be my settlement, during life, I could caress myself a while by forming some conveniences to be easy; and should not be frighted either by the solitude, or the meanness of lodging, eating or drinking. I shall say nothing upon the suspense I am in about my dearest friend; because that is a case extraordinary, and therefore by way of amusement, I will speak as if it were not in my thoughts, and only as a passenger who is in a scurvy unprovided comfortless place without one companion, and who therefore wants to be at home, where he hath all conveniences there proper for a gentleman of quality. I cannot read at night, and I have no books to read in the day. I have no subject in my head at present to write on. I dare not send my linnen to be washed, for fear of being called away at half an hour's warning, and then I must leave them behind me, which is a serious point. I live at great expense, without one comfortable bit or sup. I am afraid of joining with passengers for fear of getting acquaintance with Irish. The days are short, and I have five hours at night to spend by myself before I go to bed. I should be glad to converse with farmers or shopkeepers, but none of them speak English. A dog is better company than the vicar, for I remember him of old. What can I do but write everything that comes into my head. Watt is a Booby of that species which I dare not suffer to be familiar with me, for he would ramp on my shoulders in half an hour. But the worst part is

my half-hourly longing, and hopes and vain expectations of a wind; so that I live in suspense, which is the worst circumstance of human nature. I am a little risky (?) from two scurvy disorders, and if I should relapse, there is not a Welsh house-cur that would not have more care taken of him than I, and whose loss would not be more lamented. I confine myself to my narrow chamber in all unwalkable hours. The Master of the pacquet boat, one Jones, hath not treated me with the least civility, altho' Watt gave him my name. In short I come from being used like an Emperor to be used worse than a Dog at Holyhead. Yet my hat is worn to pieces by answering the civilities of the poor inhabitants as they pass by. The women might be safe enough, who all wear hats yet never pull them off, if the dirty streets did not foul their petticoats by courtseying so low. Look you; be not impatient, for I only wait till my watch marks 10, and then I will give you ease, and myself sleep, if I can. On my conscience you may know a Welsh dog as well as a Welshman or woman by its peevish passionate way of barking. This paper shall serve to answer all your questions about my Journey;* and I will have it printed to satisfy the Kingdom. *Forsan et hæc* then is a damned lie, for I shall always fret at the remembrance of this imprisonment. Pray pity poor Wat, for he is called dunce, puppy, and liar 500 times an hour, and yet he means not ill, for he means nothing. Oh for a dozen bottles of deanery wine and a slice of bread and butter. The wine you sent us yesterday is a little upon the sour. I wish you had chosen better. I am going to bed at ten o'clock, because I am weary of being up. Wednesday. Last night I dreamt that L^d^ Bolingbroke and Mr. Pope were at my Cathedral in the Gallery, and that my L^d^ was to preach. I could not find my surplice; the Church Servants were all out of the way; the doors shut. I sent to my L^d^ to come into my stall for more conveniency to get into the Pulpit. The Stall was all broken; they s^d^ the Collegians had done it. I squeezed among the Rabble, saw my L^d^ in the Pulpit. I thought his Prayer was good, but I forget it. In his sermon, I did not like his quoting Mr. Wycherley by name, and his Play. This is all, and so I waked. To-day we were certainly to sail; the morning was calm. Wat and I walked up the monstrous mountain properly called Holyhead or Sacrum Promontorium by Ptolemy, 2 miles from this town. I took breath 59 times. I looked from the top to see the Wicklow hills, but the day was too hazy, which I felt to my sorrow; for returning, we were overtaken with a furious shower. I got into a Welsh cabin, almost as bad as an Irish one. There was only an old Welshwoman sifting flour who understood no English, and a boy who fell a roaring for fear of me. Wat (otherwise called unfortunate Jack) ran home for my coat, but stay^d^ so long that I came home in worse rain without him, and he was so lucky to miss me, but took care to carry the key of my room where a fire was

* Swift is addressing only an imaginary correspondent.

ready for me. So I cooled my heels in the Parlor till he came, but called for a glass of Brandy. I have been cooking myself dry, and am now in my night gown ; and this moment comes a Letter to me from one Whelden who tells me he hears I am a lover of the Mathematicks, that he has found out the Longitude, shewn his discourse to Dr. Dobbs of y^{r} College, and sent Letters to all the Mathematicians in London 3 months ago, but received no answer, and desires I would read his discourse. I sent back his Letter with my answer under it, too long to tell you, only I said I had too much of the Longitude already, by 2 projectors, whom I encouraged, one of which was a cheat and the oth^{r} cut his own throat, and for himself I thought he had a mind to deceive others, or was deceived himself. And so I wait for dinner. I shall dine like a King all alone, as I have done these 6 days. As it happened, if I had gone straight from Chester to Parkgate, 8 miles, I should have been in Dublin on Sunday last. Now Mich'lmas approaches, the worst time in the year for the Sea, and this rain has made these parts unwalkable, so that I must either write or doze. Bite; when we was in the wild cabin, I order Wat to take a cloth and wipe my wet gown and cassock—it happened to be a meal bag—and as my Gown dryed, it was all daubed with flour well cemented with the rain. What do I, but see the Gown and cassock well dried in my room, and while Wat was at dinner, I was an hour rubbing the meal out of them, and did it excell^{y} ; He is just come up, and I have gravely bid him take them down to rub them, and I wait whether he will find out what I have been doing. The Rogue is come up in six minutes with my gown, and says there were but few spots (tho' he saw a thousand at first) but neither wonders at it nor seems to suspect me who laboured like a horse to rub them out. The 3 Pacquet boats are now all on this side ; and the weather grows worse, and so much rain that there is an end of my walking. I wish you would send me word how I shall dispose of my time. If the Vicar could but play at back-gammon I were an Emperor ; but I know him not. I am as insignificant here as Parson Brooke is in Dublin. By my conscience, I believe Cæsar would be the same without his army at his back. Well, the longer I stay here, the more you will murmur for want of packets. Whoever would wish to live long should live here, for a day is longer than a week, and if the weather be foul, as long as a fortnight. Yet here I could live with two or three friends, in a warm house, and good wine—much better than being a Slave in Ireld. But my misery is, that I am in the worst part of Wales under the very worst circumstances ; afraid of a relapse, in utmost solitude ; impatient for the condition of our friend ; not a soul to converse with, hindered from exercise by rain, cooped up in a room not half so large as one of the Deanery Closets. My room smokes into the bargain, and the other is too cold and moist to be without a fire. There is or should be a Proverbe here, "When Mrs. Welsh's Chimney smokes, Tis a sign she'll keep her folks. But, when of smoke the room is clear, It is a sign we sha'nt

stay here." All this is to divert thinking. Tell me, am not I in a comfortable way? The Yacht is to be here for L^d^ Carteret on the 14th of Octb^r^. I fancy he and I shall come over together. I have open'd my door to let in the wind that it may drive out the smoke. I asked the wind why it is so cross, he assures me 'tis not his fault, but his cursed Master Æolus's. Here is a young Jackanapes in the same Inn waiting for a wind, who would fain be my companion; and if I stay here much longer, I am afraid all my pride and grandeur will truckle to comply with him, especially if I finish these leaves that remain; but I will write close, and do as the Devil did at mass—pull the paper with my teeth to make it hold out.

Thursday. 'Tis allowed that we learn patience by suffering. I have now not spirit enough left me to fret. I was so cunning these 3 last days, that whenever I began to rage and storm at the weather, I took special care to turn my face towards Ireland, in hopes by my breath to push the wind forward. But now I give up. However, when, upon asking how is the wind, the people answer, Full in y^r^ teeth, I cannot help wishing, worse were in theirs. Well, it is now 3 afternoon. I have dined and invited the Master. The wind and tide serve, and I am just taking boat to go to the Ship: so adieu till I see you at the Deanery.

Friday, Mich's day. You will now know something of what it is to be at sea. We had not been half an hour in the ship till a fierce wind rose directly against us. We tried a good while, but the storm still continued. So we turned back, and it was eight at night, dark and rainy, before the ship got back, and at anchor. The other passengers went back in a boat to Holyhead, but to prevent accidents and broken shins I lay all night on board and came back this morning at 8: am now in my Chamber, where I must stay, and get in a new stock of patience. You all know well enough where I am, for I wrote thrice after your Letters that desired my coming over. The last was from Coventry, 19th instant, but I brought it with me to Chester, and saw it put into the Post, on Thursday 21st, and the next day followed it myself, but the Pacquet boat was gone before I could get here, because I could not ride 70 miles a day.

APPENDIX X.

THE WILL OF ESTHER JOHNSON

ESTHER JOHNSON'S Will has been printed at full length by the late Sir W. Wilde, in his "Closing Years of Dean Swift." It is only necessary here to notice some of its important points.

It is dated December 30th, 1727, and begins thus:—

"In the name of God. Amen. I, Esther Johnson, of the city of Dublin, spinster, being of tolerable health in body, and perfectly sound

in mind, do here make my last will and testament, revoking all former wills whatsoever. First, I bequeath my soul to the infinite mercy of God with a most humble hope of everlasting salvation, and my body to the earth, to be buried in the great aisle of the Cathedral Church of St. Patrick's, Dublin, and I desire that a decent monument of plain white marble may be fixed in the wall, over the place of my burial, not exceeding the value of twenty pounds sterling, and that the charges of my funeral may not exceed the said sum."

She next provides for the investment of £1000 of her property in land, to be purchased, exactly according to the directions of Swift's own Will, in any province of Ireland, except Connaught. The proceeds of such investment are to go, during their lives to her mother and sister, and thereafter to the payment of a salary to a chaplain in Dr. Steevens's hospital.*

The next stipulation of her Will again bears a striking resemblance to the Will of Swift. "If it shall happen," she says, "(which God forbid) that at any time hereafter the present Established Episcopal Church of this kingdom shall come to be abolished, and be no longer the national Established Church of the said Kingdom, I do, in that case, declare wholly null and void the bequest above made * * * and my will is, that, in the case aforesaid, it devolves to my nearest relation then living."

As in the will of Swift, there is a clause preventing rack-renting on the lands to be purchased and held in trust, under her Will.

After some specific legacies, the Will proceeds :—

"Lastly I make and constitute the Rev. Dr. Thomas Sheridan, of the City of Dublin, the Rev. Mr. John Grattan, the Rev. Mr. Francis Corbet, and John Rochfort, Esq., of the City of Dublin, executors of my last Will and testament. I desire likewise that my plate, books, furniture, and whatever other moveables I have, may be sold to discharge my debts : and that my strong box, and all the papers I have in it or elsewhere, may be given to the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's.

"*Item.* I bequeath to the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Swift a bond of thirty pounds, due to me by Dr. Russell, in trust for the use of Mrs. Honoria Swanson."

She designates herself as a "Spinster," and she signs herself "Esther Johnson." But this, as has already been pointed out, is no argument against the marriage : it was obviously a necessary part of the compact of secrecy ; and she had no reason to fear that Swift would use his legal powers as her husband, to interfere with, or to invalidate, the terms of a Will, so made.

* This was exactly the disposition of her property which Swift had urged, in a letter from London, to Mr. Worrall, of 15 July, 1726, that she should make. She adds the condition that the chaplain should be unmarried : and this Monck Mason conceives to be an argument in favour of his contention that she had not herself gone through the ceremony. The cause is weak that requires to be supported by such a puerility.

APPENDIX XI.

THE CHARACTER OF MRS. JOHNSON [STELLA]

[This character gives us so clear a picture of the qualities which Swift found to admire in her whom he had chosen from amongst all women, that the bond between him and Stella is not to be understood without it: and it is printed here as essential to his own biography.]

THIS day, being Sunday, January 28, 1727-8, about eight o'clock at night, a servant brought me a note, with an account of the death of the truest, most virtuous, and valuable friend, that I, or perhaps any other person, was ever blessed with. She expired about six in the evening of this day; and as soon as I am left alone, which is about eleven at night, I resolve, for my own satisfaction, to say something of her life and character.

She was born at Richmond, in Surrey, on the 13th day of March, in the year 1681. Her father was a younger brother of a good family in Nottinghamshire, her mother of a lower degree; and indeed she had little to boast of her birth. I knew her from six years old, and had some share in her education, by directing what books she should read, and perpetually instructing her in the principles of honour and virtue; from which she never swerved in any one action or moment of her life. She was sickly from her childhood until about the age of fifteen; but then grew into perfect health, and was looked upon as one of the most beautiful, graceful, and agreeable young women in London, only a little too fat. Her hair was blacker than a raven, and every feature of her face in perfection. She lived generally in the country, with a family where she contracted an intimate friendship with another lady of more advanced years. I was then, to my mortification, settled in Ireland; and about a year after, going to visit my friends in England, I found she was a little uneasy upon the death of a person on whom she had some dependance.* Her fortune, at that time, was in all not above fifteen hundred pounds, the interest of which was but a scanty maintenance. Under this consideration, and indeed very much for my own satisfaction, who had few friends or acquaintance in Ireland, I prevailed with her and her dear friend and companion, the other lady, to draw what money they had into Ireland, a great part of their fortune being in annuities upon funds. Money was then ten *per cent.* in Ireland, besides the advantage of returning it, and all necessaries of life at half

* The omission of Sir W. Temple's name is clearly due to Swift's strained relations with the family.

the price. They complied with my advice, and soon after came over; but I happening to continue some time longer in England, they were much discouraged to live in Dublin, where they were wholly strangers. She was at that time about nineteen years old, and her person was soon distinguished. But the adventure looked so like a frolic, the censure held for some time, as if there were a secret history in such a removal; which, however, soon blew off by her excellent conduct. She came over with her friend on the ———— in the year 170–; and they both lived together until this day, when death removed her from us. For some years past, she had been visited with continual ill health; and several times, within these last two years, her life was despaired of. But, for this twelvemonth past, she never had a day's health; and, properly speaking, she has been dying six months, but kept alive, almost against nature, by the generous kindness of two physicians, and the care of her friends. Thus far I writ the same night between eleven and twelve.

Never was any of her sex born with better gifts of the mind, or who more improved them by reading and conversation. Yet her memory was not of the best, and was impaired in the latter years of her life. But I cannot call to mind that I ever once heard her make a wrong judgment of persons, books, or affairs. Her advice was always the best, and with the greatest freedom, mixed with the greatest decency. She had a gracefulness, somewhat more than human, in every motion, word, and action. Never was so happy a conjunction of civility, freedom, easiness, and sincerity. There seemed to be a combination among all that knew her, to treat her with a dignity much beyond her rank; yet people of all sorts were never more easy than in her company. Mr. Addison, when he was in Ireland, being introduced to her, immediately found her out; and, if he had not soon after left the kingdom, assured me he would have used all endeavours to cultivate her friendship. A rude or conceited coxcomb passed his time very ill, upon the least breach of respect; for, in such a case, she had no mercy, but was sure to expose him to the contempt of the standers-by, yet in such a manner, as he was ashamed to complain, and durst not resent. All of us who had the happiness of her friendship agreed unanimously, that, in an afternoon or evening's conversation, she never failed, before we parted, of delivering the best thing that was said in the company. Some of us have written down several of her sayings, or what the French call *bons mots*, wherein she excelled beyond belief. She never mistook the understanding of others; nor ever said a severe word, but where a much severer was deserved.

Her servants loved, and almost adored her at the same time. She would, upon occasions, treat them with freedom; yet her demeanour was so awful, that they durst not fail in the least point of respect. She chid them seldom, but it was with severity, which had an effect on them for a long time after.

January 29. My head aches, and I can write no more.

January 30. Tuesday.

This is the night of the funeral, which my sickness will not suffer me to attend. It is now nine at night; and I am removed into another apartment, that I may not see the light in the church, which is just over against the window of my bed-chamber.

With all the softness of temper that became a lady, she had the personal courage of a hero. She and her friend having removed their lodgings to a new house, which stood solitary, a parcel of rogues, armed, attempted the house, where there was only one boy. She was then about four-and-twenty; and having been warned to apprehend some such attempt, she learned the management of a pistol; and the other women and servants being half dead with fear, she stole softly to her dining-room window, put on a black hood to prevent being seen, primed the pistol fresh, gently lifted up the sash, and taking her aim with the utmost presence of mind, discharged the pistol, loaden with bullets, into the body of one villain, who stood the fairest mark. The fellow, mortally wounded, was carried off by the rest, and died the next morning; but his companions could not be found. The Duke of Ormond had often drunk her health to me upon that account, and had always a high esteem for her. She was indeed under some apprehensions of going in a boat, after some danger she had narrowly escaped by water, but she was reasoned thoroughly out of it. She was never known to cry out, or discover any fear, in a coach or on horseback; or any uneasiness by those sudden accidents with which most of her sex, either by weakness or affectation, appear so much disordered.

She never had the least absence of mind in conversation, or given to interruption, or appeared eager to put in her word, by waiting impatiently until another had done. She spoke in a most agreeable voice, in the plainest words, never hesitating, except out of modesty before new faces, where she was somewhat reserved; nor, among her nearest friends, ever spoke much at a time. She was but little versed in the common topics of female chat; scandal, censure, and detraction, never came out of her mouth; yet, among a few friends, in private conversation, she made little ceremony in discovering her contempt of a coxcomb, and describing all his follies to the life; but the follies of her own sex she was rather inclined to extenuate or to pity.

When she was once convinced, by open facts, of any breach of truth or honour in a person of high station, especially in the church, she could not conceal her indignation, nor hear them named without shewing her displeasure in her countenance; particularly one or two of the latter sort, whom she had known and esteemed, but detested above all mankind, when it was manifest that they had sacrificed those two precious virtues to their ambition, and would much sooner have forgiven them the common immoralities of the laity.

Her frequent fits of sickness, in most parts of her life, had prevented

her from making that progress in reading which she would otherwise have done. She was well versed in the Greek and Roman story, and was not unskilled in that of France and England. She spoke French perfectly, but forgot much of it by neglect and sickness. She had read carefully all the best books of travels, which serve to open and enlarge the mind. She understood the Platonic and Epicurean philosophy, and judged very well of the defects of the latter. She made very judicious abstracts of the best books she had read. She understood the nature of government, and could point out all the errors of Hobbes, both in that and religion. She had a good insight into physic, and knew somewhat of anatomy; in both which she was instructed in her younger days by an eminent physician, who had her long under his care, and bore the highest esteem for her person and understanding. She had a true taste of wit and good sense, both in poetry and prose, and was a perfect good critic of style neither was it easy to find a more proper or impartial judge, whose advice an author might better rely on, if he intended to send a thing into the world, provided it was on a subject that came within the compass of her knowledge. Yet, perhaps, she was sometimes too severe, which is a safe and pardonable error. She preserved her wit, judgment, and vivacity, to the last, but often used to complain of her memory.

Her fortune, with some accession, could not, as I have heard say, amount to much more than two thousand pounds, whereof a great part fell with her life, having been placed upon annuities in England, and one in Ireland.

In a person so extraordinary, perhaps it may be pardonable to mention some particulars, although of little moment, farther than to set forth her character. Some presents of gold pieces being often made to her while she was a girl, by her mother and other friends, on promise to keep them, she grew into such a spirit of thrift, that, in about three years, they amounted to above two hundred pounds. She used to shew them with boasting; but her mother, apprehending she would be cheated of them, prevailed, in some months, and with great importunities, to have them put out to interest; when the girl, losing the pleasure of seeing and counting her gold, which she never failed of doing many times in a day, and despairing of heaping up such another treasure, her humour took quite the contrary turn; she grew careless and squandering of every new acquisition, and so continued till about two-and-twenty; when, by advice of some friends, and the fright of paying large bills of tradesmen who enticed her into their debt, she began to reflect upon her own folly, and was never at rest until she had discharged all her shop bills, and refunded herself a considerable sum she had run out. After which, by the addition of a few years, and a superior understanding, she became, and continued all her life, a most prudent economist; yet still with a stronger bent to the liberal side, wherein she gratified herself by avoiding all expense in clothes (which she ever despised) beyond what was merely decent. And,

although her frequent returns of sickness were very chargeable, except fees to physicians, of which she met with several so generous, that she could force nothing on them, (and indeed she must otherwise have been undone,) yet she never was without a considerable sum of ready money. Insomuch, that, upon her death, when her nearest friends thought her very bare, her executors found in her strong box about one hundred and fifty pounds in gold. She lamented the narrowness of her fortune in nothing so much, as that it did not enable her to entertain her friends so often, and in so hospitable a manner, as she desired. Yet they were always welcome; and while she was in health to direct, were treated with neatness and elegance, so that the revenues of her and her companion passed for much more considerable than they really were. They lived always in lodgings; their domestics consisted of two maids and one man. She kept an account of all the family expenses, from her arrival in Ireland to some months before her death; and she would often repine, when looking back upon the annals of her household bills, that everything necessary for life was double the price, while interest of money was sunk almost to one half; so that the addition made to her fortune was indeed grown absolutely necessary.

[I since writ as I found time.]

But her charity to the poor was a duty not to be diminished, and therefore became a tax upon those tradesmen who furnish the fopperies of other ladies. She bought clothes as seldom as possible, and those as plain and cheap as consisted with the situation she was in; and wore no lace for many years. Either her judgment or fortune was extraordinary in the choice of those on whom she bestowed her charity, for it went farther in doing good than double the sum from any other hand. And I have heard her say, "she always met with gratitude from the poor;" which must be owing to her skill in distinguishing proper objects, as well as her gracious manner in relieving them.

But she had another quality that much delighted her, although it might be thought a kind of check upon her bounty; however, it was a pleasure she could not resist: I mean that of making agreeable presents; wherein I never knew her equal, although it be an affair of as delicate a nature as most in the course of life. She used to define a present, "That it was a gift to a friend of something he wanted, or was fond of, and which could not be easily gotten for money." I am confident, during my acquaintance with her, she has, in these and some other kinds of liberality, disposed of to the value of several hundred pounds. As to presents made to herself, she received them with great unwillingness, but especially from those to whom she had ever given any; being, on all occasions, the most disinterested mortal I ever knew or heard of.

From her own disposition, at least as much as from the frequent want of health, she seldom made any visits; but her own lodgings, from before twenty years old, were frequented by many persons of the graver sort,

who all respected her highly, upon her good sense, good manners, and conversation. Among these were the late Primate Lindsay, Bishop Lloyd, Bishop Ashe, Bishop Brown, Bishop Sterne, Bishop Pulleyn, with some others of later date; and indeed the greatest number of her acquaintance was among the clergy. Honour, truth, liberality, good nature, and modesty, were the virtues she chiefly possessed, and most valued in her acquaintance: and where she found them, would be ready to allow for some defects; nor valued them less, although they did not shine in learning or in wit: but would never give the least allowance for any failures in the former, even to those who made the greatest figure in either of the two latter. She had no use of any person's liberality, yet her detestation of covetous people made her uneasy if such a one was in her company; upon which occasion she would say many things very entertaining and humorous.

She never interrupted any person who spoke; she laughed at no mistakes they made, but helped them out with modesty; and if a good thing were spoken, but neglected, she would not let it fall, but set it in the best light to those who were present. She listened to all that was said, and had never the least distraction or absence of thought.

It was not safe, nor prudent, in her presence, to offend in the least word against modesty; for she then gave full employment to her wit, her contempt, and resentment, under which even stupidity and brutality were forced to sink into confusion; and the guilty person, by her future avoiding him like a bear or a satyr, was never in a way to transgress a second time.

It happened, one single coxcomb, of the pert kind, was in her company, among several other ladies; and in his flippant way, began to deliver some double meanings; the rest flapped their fans, and used the other common expedients practised in such cases, of appearing not to mind or comprehend what was said. Her behaviour was very different, and perhaps may be censured. She said thus to the man: "Sir, all these ladies and I understand your meaning very well, having, in spite of our care, too often met with those of your sex who wanted manners and good sense. But, believe me, neither virtuous nor even vicious women love such kind of conversation. However, I will leave you, and report your behaviour: and whatever visit I make, I shall first inquire at the door whether you are in the house, that I may be sure to avoid you." I know not whether a majority of ladies would approve of such a proceeding; but I believe the practice of it would soon put an end to that corrupt conversation, the worst effect of dullness, ignorance, impudence, and vulgarity; and the highest affront to the modesty and understanding of the female sex.

By returning very few visits, she had not much company of her own sex, except those whom she most loved for their easiness, or esteemed for their good sense: and those, not insisting on ceremony, came often to

her. But she rather chose men for her companions, the usual topics of ladies' discourse being such as she had little knowledge of, and less relish. Yet no man was upon the rack to entertain her, for she easily descended to anything that was innocent and diverting. News, politics, censure, family management, or town-talk, she always diverted to something else; but these indeed seldom happened, for she chose her company better: and therefore many, who mistook her and themselves, having solicited her acquaintance, and finding themselves disappointed, after a few visits dropped off; and she was never known to inquire into the reason, nor ask what was become of them.

She was never positive in arguing; and she usually treated those who were so, in a manner which well enough gratified that unhappy disposition; yet in such a sort as made it very contemptible, and at the same time did some hurt to the owners. Whether this proceeded from her easiness in general, or from her indifference to persons, or from her despair of mending them, or from the same practice which she much liked in Mr. Addison, I cannot determine; but when she saw any of the company very warm in a wrong opinion, she was more inclined to confirm them in it than oppose them. The excuse she commonly gave, when her friends asked the reason, was, "That it prevented noise, and saved time." Yet I have known her very angry with some, whom she much esteemed, for sometimes falling into that infirmity.

She loved Ireland much better than the generality of those who owe both their birth and riches to it; and having brought over all the fortune she had in money, left the reversion of the best part of it, one thousand pounds, to Dr. Steevens's Hospital. She detested the tyranny and injustice of England, in their treatment of this kingdom. She had indeed reason to love a country, where she had the esteem and friendship of all who knew her, and the universal good report of all who ever heard of her, without one exception, if I am told the truth by those who keep general conversation. Which character is the more extraordinary, in falling to a person of so much knowledge, wit, and vivacity, qualities that are used to create envy, and consequently censure; and must be rather imputed to her great modesty, gentle behaviour, and inoffensiveness, than to her superior virtues.

Although her knowledge, from books and company, was much more extensive than usually falls to the share of her sex; yet she was so far from making a parade of it, that her female visitants, on their first acquaintance, who expected to discover it by what they call hard words and deep discourse, would be sometimes disappointed, and say, "They found she was like other women." But wise men, through all her modesty, whatever they discoursed on, could easily observe that she understood them very well, by the judgment shewn in her observations, as well as in her questions.

APPENDIX XII.

ORIGINAL LETTERS FROM THE MSS. IN THE POSSESSION OF THE EARL OF CORK

THESE letters, for which I am indebted to the kindness of the Earl of Cork, have been quoted frequently in the narrative of Swift's last years. But a few additional extracts will have interest, as throwing light on Swift's occupations and moods during these years. Every one of the letters expresses as strongly as possible his regard for Lord Orrery.

The first extract is from a letter of March 22, $17\frac{33}{32}$.

"I had this minute a letter from England telling me that excise on tobacco is passed, 265 against 204, which was a greater number of sitters than I can remember. It is concluded they will go on in another session to farther articles, and then you will have the honor to be a slave in two kingdoms. Here is a pamphlet just come out in defence of the excise, it was reprinted here by a rascal from England, in a great office and at his own charge, to pave the way for the same proceeding here: but I hope our members will think they are slaves enough already: and perhaps somebody or other may be tempted to open folk's eyes.

"I sent the Epitaph* on Mr. Gay to Mrs. B—— to be copied for your Lordship, and I think there are some lines that might and should be corrected. I am going to write to the author, and shall tell him my opinion. I agree with your Lordship that his imitation of Horace is one of the best things he hath lately writ: and he tells me himself, that he never took more pains than in his *Poem to Lord Bathurst* upon the use of riches: nor less than in this, which however his friends call his *chef d'œuvre*, although he writ it in two mornings, and this may happen when a poet lights upon a fruitful hint, and becomes fond of it. I have often thought that hints were owing as much to good fortune as to invention. And I have sometimes chid poor Mr Gay for dwelling too long upon a hint (as he did in the sequel of the *Beggar's Opera*, and this unlucky posthumous production.)† He hath likewise left a second part of fables, of which I prophesy no good. I have been told that few painters can copy their own originals to perfection. And I believe the first thoughts on a subject that occurs to a poet's imagination are usually the most natural * * * * A stupid beast in London, one Alexander Burnet (I suppose the Bishop's son) has parodied Mr. Pope's satirical imitation in a manner that makes

* The epitaph by Pope in Westminster Abbey, beginning "Of manners gentle, of affections mild."

† The "sequel" was *Polly*: the "posthumous production," the opera of *Achilles*.

me envy Mr. Pope for having such an adversary, than whose performance nothing can be more low and scurrilous."

The next extract is from a letter of July 17th, 1735.

"MY LORD,

I am like a desperate debtor, who keeps out of the way as much as he can; and want of health in my case is equal to want of money or of honesty in the other. I have been some months settling my perplexed affairs, like a dying man, and like the dying man, pestered with continual interruptions as well as difficulties. I have now finished my will in form, wherein I have settled my whole fortune on the city, in trust for building and maintaining an Hospital for idiots and lunatics, by which I save the expense of a chaplain, and almost of a physician, so that I now want only the circumstance of health to be very idle, and a constant correspondent, but no further than upon trifles. As to writing in verse or prose I am a real king, for I never had so many good *subjects* in my life; and the more a king, because like all the rest of my rank (except K. George) I am so bad a governor of them, that I do not regard what becomes of them, nor hath any single one among them thrived under me these three years past. My greatest loss is that of my viceroy Trifler Sheridan. * * * Our Bishop Rundle is not yet come over, and I believe his chaplain Philips is in a reasonable fright that his patron may fall sooner than any living in the diocese; I suppose it is Trim Tram betwixt both, for neither of them have three pennyworth of stamina. If there be any merry company in this town, I am an utter stranger to the persons and places, except when half a score come to sponge on me every Sunday evening. Dr. Helsham is as arrogant as ever, and Dr. Delany costs two *thirteens* to be visited in wet weather, by which I should be out of pocket nine pence when I dine with him.—This moment (Wednesday, six o'clock evening, July 16th) Mr. Philips sent me word that he landed with his bishop this morning, and hath sent me two volumes of poetry just reeking, by one John Hughes, Esq.† * * * * * I have been turning over Squire Hughes's poems, and his puppy publisher, one Duncomb's, preface and life of the author. This is all your fault. I am put out of all patience to the present set of whifflers, and their new-fangled politeness. Duncomb's preface is fifty pages upon celebrating a fellow I never once heard of in my life, though I lived in London most of the time that Duncomb makes him floursh. Duncomb put a short note in loose paper to make me a present of the two volumes, and desired my pardon for putting my name among the subscribers. I was in a rage when I looked and found my name; but was a little in countenance when I saw your Lordship's there too. The verses and prose are such as our

† Whom he speaks of, in a letter to Pope, as "too grave a poet for me."

Dublin third-rate rhymers might write just the same for nine hours a day till the coming of Antichrist. I wish I could send them to you by post for your punishment. Pray my Lord as you ride along compute how much the desolation and poverty of the people have increased since your last travels through your dominions. Although I fancy we suffer a great deal more twenty miles round Dublin, than in the remoter parts, except your city of Cork, who are starving (I hope) by their own villany. Since you left the town there hath not been one riot either in the University nor among the Cavan Bail,* which causeth a great dearth of news, nay not so much as a review, and but two or three bloody murders. * * * * I called at my Lady Acheson's, and in came Philips very hearty, and has some excellent stories piping hot from London, which I have entreated him to send you. His Bishop is full of disease, but Philips pronounces him the best man alive, and he does not value the chaplainship the thousandth part so much as the agreeable manner that it was given. This you will agree to be a compliment perfectly new, as new as any of my Polite Conversation. I will hold you no longer, but remain, My dear Lord, with more expression than the remainder of this paper will hold,

Ever your, etc.,
J. S."

On Sept. 25th, 1735, he writes :

"Sheridan staid here not above ten days, all which he passed abroad, and only lay at the Deanery. He boasts in every letter of the fine air and meat and ale of Cavan, and the honest merry neighbourhood. He writes me English Latinized, and Latin Englyfied, but neither of them equal to mine, as my very enemies allow. It is true indeed, I am gone so far in this science that I can hardly write common English, I am so apt to mingle it with Latin. For instance, instead of writing, *my enemies* I was going to spell it *mi en emis.* * * * * I was to sign a report of a Committee at the Blue-Coat Hospital just now ; but would not do it till the words *mob* and *behave* were altered to *rabble* and *behaved themselves.* Curse on your new-fangled London wits, *misti lis*† corrupted, and you, out of spite, will in your next letter torment me with *sho'dn't, wo'dn't, be'n't, can't, cu'dn't.*'"

On March 31st, 1737, he writes :

"My dear Lord :

I am so busy a person in State affairs, that I cannot endure to read country letters. I have, indeed, some faint remembrance that I received a letter from you about four days ago, and another about as many days sooner. Confound that jade Fortune who did not make me a

* The mob in St. Patrick's Liberty was called the Cavan or Kevin Bail.

† *I.e.* "my style is."

lord, although it were of Ireland; I should have been above the little embranglements into which I put myself. The thing was this. A great flood of halfpence from England hath rolled in upon us by the politics of the Primate.* I railed at them to Faulkner, who printed an advertisement naming me, and my ill-will towards them; for which he was called before the Council, was terribly abused, but not sent to prison, only left to the mercy of the common law for publishing a libel, for so they called his paragraph. I expected to have the same honour of attending their ————ships; I sent off all my papers, as I have often done; but their ——— honours have not meddled further, and the halfpence must pass. I quarrel not at the coin, but at the indignity of not being coined here, and the loss of £12,000 in gold and silver to us, which, for aught I know, may be half our store. I am told by others as well as your Lordship that the city of Cork hath sent me my Silver box and Freedom, but I know nothing of it.† I am sorry there are not fools enough in Cork to keep you out of the spleen. Have you got any money from your tenants? Can you lend me a thousand pounds? Are you forced to diet and lodge? Or, if I visit you about two, can you give me a chicken and a pint of wine? It was your pride to refuse £100 that I offered to lend you when I thought you were in want; can you now do me the same civility? But I scorn to accept it! Mrs. Whiteway found £60 in my cabinet, besides some few (but very small) banker's bills. When I get my Cork box, I will certainly sell it for not being gold. * * * * I desire your Aldermen would begin with gold, and if any mischief should happen, let them send another eighteen times and 50 grains heavier in silver."

He turns aside to send some civil messages from Mrs. Whiteway, and to ask Lord Orrery to come and see him, that he may take "an eternal farewell" of him: and thus describes his own state. "I am daily losing ground, both in health and spirits. I am plagued this month with a noise in my head which deafens me, and some touches of giddiness—my old disorders. I am fretting at universal public mismanagement."

After some inquiries as to Lord Orrery's health, he goes on:—

"My neighbour Prelate, who politicly makes his court to Sir R. W. by imitating that great minister in every minute pulling up of his breeches—this prelate, I say—as parsons say "I say"—harangued my neighbours against me under the name of some wicked man about the new halfpence, but received no other answers than "God bless the——‡"

He has no news, he says, nor can Mrs. Whiteway give him any. "It is now the last day of March, and I have not one scheme to make a

* Archbishop Boulter. See p. 419.

† Swift acknowledged the receipt of the Freedom in a silver box, on the 15th of August this year. But he was offended that there was no inscription stating the grounds of the presentation, and returned it accordingly. His anger was appeased by a suitable inscription being afterwards engraved upon the box.

‡ Presumably the Drapier.

hundred fools to morrow.* Mrs. Whiteway is just gone down stairs, but I expect her every moment up: and that she is gathering materials at the street-door gate. I had yesterday a letter from my old friend Lord Carteret, who says not a syllable to confirm what we hear from England, that Walpole and Mr. Pulteney are become friends, and both to be made Lords: which I scarce believe: because the first might have been a Duke many years ago, if it had been possible to govern the Parliament without him."

On the 2nd of July, 1737, Swift sends the Preface to the *History of the Four Last Years* to Lord Orrery, with this letter:

"MY DEAR LORD:

I have corrected the enclosed as well as my shattered head was able. I entreat your Lordship will please to alter whatever you have a mind, and please to deliver it, with your own hand, to Doctor King, at his Chambers in the Temple. If you sail on Monday, I fear you will not have time to see me, so I must bid you Farewell for ever. For although you should stay a day or two longer you will be in too great a hurry for me to expect you. May God protect you in h(*appiness* †) and the continuance in the Love and Esteem of (*all good*) men. I can hear something better, but my head is very ill, but in all conditions I will live and die with the truest Respect, Esteem, Love, and Attachment, Your most obedient and most

Obliged Serv^{t}.

J. SWIFT."

On Nov. 26th of the same year, he writes about some lawsuit in which a friend is interested, and closes thus:

"I am grown an entire Ghost of a Ghost of what I was, although you left me ill enough. Pray God bless you in every circumstance of yourself, your Family and Fortune.

"I could tell you a Million things relating to this country: of the great plenty of money, by the Primate's scheme of the lowering of the Gold, which its younger brother silver hath followed, and neither have been seen since. I could be more large upon both Houses and all their good actions. Pray send me a silver sixpence by the first opportunity. Pray God preserve you and your family, my dear Lord, and may you live till Christian times."

On Feb. 2, $17\frac{38}{37}$, he writes again, and in the course of the letter, upbraids Lord Orrery with considerable warmth.

"I complain of your Lordship upon one Article. Mrs. Whiteway assures me, that a correct copy of the *History of the Four Last Years*, &c.,

* The Journal to Stella shows us that All Fools' Day was not always so unobserved by Swift.

† The paper is here torn.

was put into your hands to be given to Doctor King of St. Mary Hall in Oxford, to be published as he could agree with some bookseller or printer: but I have never heard a word from the Doctor since. How will you answer this, my Dear Lord? This proceeding is directly against all the Rules of Justice, Honour, Friendship, and conscience. My chief design in that History was with the utmost truth and zeal to defend the Proceedings of that blessed Queen and her Ministry, as well as myself, who had a greater share than usually falls to men of my level. I did thorough (*sic*) the whole treatise impartially adhere to Truth. I had some regard to increase my own Reputation, and besides I should have been glad to have seen my small Fortune increased by an honest means. I therefore wish that (your) Lordship would please, if your time and leisure permit, to see Doctor King, and desire he would explain himself concerning his long silence, and his very slow, or *no* proceedings in a point which I have so much at heart for a hundred reasons. I believe you sometimes see my friend, Mr. Pope. Pray report to him the state of my health, and the disposition of my mind, that I am become good for less than nothing. He is one of the oldest and dearest friends I have remaining. * * *. Do you know my old friend Erasmus Lewis? If so, I desire your Lordship will present him with my true Love and Esteem. And if my Lord Bathurst be one of your acquaintance let him know how grateful I desire to be for the continual marks of his Favour and Friendship. Thus I treat you, my Lord, in the phrase of Plautus, as one of my *Pueri Salutigeruli.*"

There is not a little of pathos in the sorrow with which he sees the efforts of his old age neglected, and in the eagerness with which he presses himself on the remembrance of his old friends.

APPENDIX XIII.

SWIFT'S DISEASE

IN the account which I have given of Swift's later years, and in my references to his disease, and to the effect which it had upon his character and ultimately upon his reason, it has been my object to deal with the question from what may be called the biographical, and not the medical, point of view. The most recent medical opinion clearly establishes the fact, which is of main interest in his biography, that Swift's disease was not a case of gradually developing insanity, which might have affected his reason, even while its developement was proceeding; but a case of specific malady, which tortured him during life, and which ultimately

produced a definite injury to the brain, but which up to that point in no way obliterated his reason. It may be well to state very shortly one or two of the facts which medical science has proved.

Sir William Wilde, in his "Closing Years of Dean Swift," gave the first careful analysis of Swift's symptoms: and successfully proved that the term insanity had been far too sweepingly applied to Swift. He showed that the Dean suffered throughout life from brain pressure, aggravated by gastric attacks: and that congestion, to which he says the name of *epileptic vertigo* might be applied, was ultimately accompanied by paralysis, under which the brain sank into lethargy rather than insanity. Dr. Bucknill, F.R.S. in the number of *Brain*, which appeared in January (1882), has carried further Sir William Wilde's inquiries, in the light of the recent discoveries of medical science. He proves that the two maladies of giddiness and deafness from which Swift suffered, sometimes separately, and sometimes conjointly, and for which he himself assigned causes in a surfeit of fruit and in a cold, respectively, really had their common origin in a disease in the region of the ear, to which the name of *Labyrinthine vertigo* has been given. This physical malady, as Dr. Bucknill shows, would have an increasingly depressing effect as years went on, or strength failed, and as other causes for melancholy came to ally themselves with it. The Dean was, in short, reduced to the state of profound gloom, apathy, and physical suffering, which his own words repeatedly describe, and which he sums up with more force than metrical accuracy in the Latin line,

Vertiginosus, inops, surdus, male gratus amicis.

But nothing that could be called insanity came on, until this physical and local malady produced paralysis, a symptom of which was the not uncommon one of aphasia, or the automatic utterance of words, ungoverned by intention. As a consequence of that paralysis, but not before, the brain, already weakened by senile decay, at length gave way, and Swift sank into the dementia which preceded his death.

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